

*Approved October 20, 2023*

**MINUTES  
OF THE  
THIRTY-FOURTH GENERAL SYNOD  
OF THE  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

**“MAKING ALL THINGS NEW”**

**JUNE 30 – JULY 4, 2023**

**KAREN GEORGIA THOMPSON, ADMINISTRATOR  
THE THIRTY-FOURTH GENERAL SYNOD**

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**MINUTES  
OF THE  
THIRTY-FOURTH GENERAL SYNOD  
OF THE  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

**“MAKING ALL THINGS NEW”**

**JUNE 30 – JULY 4, 2023**

**Friday afternoon, June 30, 2023  
First Plenary Session**

**1. GENERAL SYNOD CALL TO ORDER**

Bob Sandman, Moderator, called the first business session of the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ to Order and welcomed participants, visitors, and guests to Indianapolis.

**2. WELCOME FROM HOST CONFERENCE**

Chad Abbott, Indiana-Kentucky Conference Minister, welcomed attendees to Indianapolis.

Bob Sandman acknowledged the work of Chad Abbot, Indiana-Kentucky Conference staff, and the Local Arrangements Committee.

**3. INTRODUCTION OF GENERAL SYNOD LEADERSHIP**

Bob Sandman introduced the following General Synod leaders: Rushan Sinnaduray, Assistant Moderator of General Synod; Terry Williams, Stage Parliamentarian; Corey Larson, Agenda Coordinator; Heather Fosburgh, Floor Parliamentarian; Karen Georgia Thompson, General Synod Administrator; Valerie Smith, Assistant Administrator; David Anderson, Committee Process Team.

**4. REPORT OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE**

Bob Sandman called on Marsha Williams of the United Church of Christ Board to give the Report of the Credentials Committee.

Marsha reported that the total allotted number of General Synod delegates is currently 675 and 653 General Synod delegates were registered at the time of the committee’s final review. The Delegation-as-a-Whole is in compliance.

Bob Sandman indicated the report of the Credentials Committee is received and if there are no objections the report is adopted.

**23-GS-01 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopted the report of the Credentials Committee by consensus.

**5. QUORUM DECLARED**

Bob Sandman reported that the Registrar of the General Synod, Shameerah Lemon, reports 736 Delegates are registered for this General Synod. In compliance with the Constitution of the United Church of Christ and Bylaws paragraphs 194, 195, 196, 197, and 198, he declared a quorum present and empowered to act upon the business of the General Synod.

**6. INTRODUCTION OF MICROPHONE PROCEDURES AND ELECTRONIC VOTING**

Bob Sandman explained the microphones procedures and electronic voting using Slido.

**7. ADOPTION OF THE GENERAL SYNOD AGENDA**

Bob Sandman indicated that the General Synod Agenda has been available for delegate review on the website and is also available on the app. Bob called upon the Chair of the United Church of Christ Board, Cameron Barr, to move several business items.

Cameron Barr, on behalf of the Business Committee, moved that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod adopt the agenda and authorize the Agenda Committee to make any necessary adjustments.

**23-GS-02 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopted the agenda and authorized the Agenda Committee to make any necessary adjustments.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**8. AFFIRMATION OF GENERAL SYNOD STANDING RULES:**

The Standing Rules for this General Synod were adopted by the Board of Directors on June 2, 2022. These Rules spell out in great detail how the membership of the General Synod is constituted and accredited and lays out the framework for the way in which we conduct our business as a body. The Rules have been posted on the website. The Moderator moved their affirmation by the General Synod at this time.

**23-GS-03 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ affirmed the General Synod Standing Rules.

**MOTION CARRIED**



## 9. GRANTING VOICE WITHOUT VOTE TO RESOURCE PERSONS

Cameron Barr indicated that various individuals, outside experts, and guests would be addressing the General Synod over the next five days. The General Synod Standing Rules require that these individuals be granted voice without vote for the portion of the agenda for which their presence is required. The General Synod Administrator's office prepared a listing of those people.

Cameron moved on behalf of the Business Committee that the listed individuals be accorded voice without vote at the appropriate times during our meeting.

Chad Abbott	Presenter
Lee Albertson	Voting Resource
David Anderson	Committee Process Chair
Caroline Belsom	Committee Process Team
Nadia Bolz-Weber	Keynote Speaker
Amy Brooks	Theological Reflector
Marco La Cable	Presenter
Carrie Call	Presenter
Donyale Copeland	UCC National Staff
Elizabeth Dilley	Presenter
Mimi Dorhauer	Special Guest
Patrick Duggan, CBLF	Presenter
Heather Fosburgh	Parliamentarian
Dennis Frische-Mouri	Committee Process Team
David Gaewski	Floor Secretary
Ray Jordan	Theological Reflector
Heather Kimmel	General Counsel
Andrew Kramer	Voting Resource
Corey Larson	Agenda Coordinator
Jonathan Lee	Presenter
Shameerah Lemon	Registrar
Local Arrangements Committee Volunteers	
Velda Love	Presenter
Tami Marinella, CFO	Presenter
Roy Mosley	Committee Process Team
Movement Maker Awardees	
National Staff	
Kevin Peterson	Committee Process Vice-Chair
Terry Peterson	Voting Resource
Mark Pettis	Presenter
Dianne Roberts	Recorder
Kent Siladi	Presenter
Valerie Smith,	Associate GS Administrator
Susan Townsley	Committee Process Team
Aaron Wade	Presenter
Matt Wagner	Presenter

Cheryl Williams	Presenter
Terry Williams	Parliamentarian
Yvette Wynn, Racial Justice Task Force	Presenter

**23-GS-04 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ granted voice without vote to the persons listed and approved by the Business Committee.

## **MOTION CARRIED**

### **10. FIRST REPORT OF UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST BOARD, INCLUDING INTRODUCTION OF SLATE FOR GENERAL SYNOD NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

Cameron provided the report of the UCCB and expressed gratitude to the following out-going UCCB Members:

Noah Brewer-Wallin; Rachel Chapman; John Folk; Darrell Goodwin; Kevin Graham; Timothy (Tim) Hachfeld; Gloria-Ann Muraki; Onyx Kuthuru; Shari Prestemon; Paul Tch  ; Marsha Williams; Edward Davis; Bob Sandman; Hannah Cranbury; Gordon Rankin.

Cameron introduced the slate of candidates for election to the General Synod Nominating Committee:

Andria Davis, Stephanie Perdew, Amy Roon, Rebecca Sausser.

Their biographies and qualifications have been posted since April 3, 2023, and with their election by General Synod the diversity requirements for the Nominating Committee will be met or exceeded. Cameron urged all delegates to wholeheartedly vote to adopt this slate of diverse and wonderfully qualified candidates when they come for a vote later in the meeting.

### **11. REPORT OF THE GENERAL SYNOD NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

The Moderator called on June Boutwell to introduce the First Report of the General Synod Nominating Committee, the slate of nominees for election to the United Church of Christ Board, and indicated it is posted on the UCC General Synod website. The Second Report of the Nominating Committee is posted presenting the nominees for Moderator and Assistant Moderator.

The General Synod Nominating Committee presents this slate of nominees for the delegates' consideration. This is a non-compliant slate as it does not meet the criteria for members under the age of 30 or the lay/clergy ratio. The lay percentage requirement is 66 percent. The Committee was able to achieve 61.1% lay. The slate meets the requirement for all other bylaw criteria related to the composition of the board. The General Synod Nominating Committee is pleased to endorse this slate of nominees and is proud of the process by which it was produced.

One other representational consideration is geographic diversity. Our six regions in the United Church of Christ need to be represented in these at-large positions. Those numbers by region for the current board and current nominees are as follows:

Great Lakes 6; Mid Atlantic 7; New England 5; Southern 2; West Central 7; and Western 9.

On behalf of the General Synod Nominating Committee, June submitted the First and Second Reports of the General Synod Nominating Committee, as posted, and urged the election of these outstanding nominees by the delegates to the Thirty-Fourth General Synod and indicated that the election would take place at a later time.

**12. COMMITTEE ON DISPOSITION REPORT/EMPOWERING BUSINESS  
COMMITTEE TO MAKE REFERRALS OF NEW BUSINESS FOR ACTION**

The Moderator introduced Hannah Cranbury (UCCB), a member of the Sub-Committee on Disposition.

Hannah indicated that 17 proposed resolutions were received by the January deadline. No additional resolutions were received by the May 31 “could not have been anticipated” deadline. The Sub-Committee on Disposition prepared a report regarding the disposition of these resolutions in March, and this report has been posted on the General Synod website since early April.

The Sub-Committee recommended designating two of them as “Prudential Resolutions,” requiring a majority vote, and 15 as “Resolutions of Witness,” requiring a two-thirds vote.

Fifteen of the resolutions are recommended for referral to committees of the General Synod, with one committee receiving two resolutions. One resolution is recommended to go directly to a plenary session. One Prudential Resolution is recommended to go directly to Implementing Bodies, the one Affirming Licensed and Commissioned Ministers as Authorized Ministers in the UCC. A resolution sent to an implementing body is part of the General Synod record and that body is responsible for complying with the resolution. In this case, the resolution directs the implementing body, Local Church Ministries, to amend the Manual on Ministry to provide recommended processes and procedures for both licensed ministry and commissioned ministry as authorized ministries, for those Associations that want to maintain and support those forms of authorized ministry. It also directs that those changes in the Manual on Ministry be communicated to the whole church. This is consistent with the current bylaws, and the implementing body has committed to taking the steps specified in the resolution. General Synod and other settings have previously addressed the question of Licensed and Commissioned Ministers by virtue of their naming in the bylaws.

None of the resolutions have been referred directly to the United Church of Christ Board for action.

Hannah Cranbury moved that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod adopt the Report of the Committee on Disposition and delegate to the Business Committee the referral of new business submitted during the first plenary of this General Synod.

The moderator called for Discussion.

There was no discussion.

**23-GS-05 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopted the Report of the Committee on Disposition and delegated any new business to the Business Committee.

## **MOTION CARRIED**

### **13. INTRODUCTION OF NEW BUSINESS**

Bob Sandman stated that in accordance with the Standing Rules, this is the only time in the agenda when delegates may introduce new business and the new business would be introduced by title only.

There was no new business to be referred to the Business Committee for recommended action.

### **14. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **15. RECESS**

**Friday Evening, June 30, 2023**  
**Second Plenary Session**

### **1. CALL TO ORDER AND SPONSOR RECOGNITION**

Rushan Sinnaduray, Assistant Moderator, called the second plenary of the Thirty-Fourth General Synod to order and invited General Synod sponsor The United Church of Christ Cornerstone Fund to present a video.

(Video)

### **2. INTRODUCTION OF HONORED GUESTS**

Rushan welcomed the following former officers, former executives of instrumentalities, and former moderators of the United Church of Christ:

Penny Lowes, Moderator of the Thirty-Third General Synod  
Norman Williams, Moderator of the Thirty-Second General Synod  
Brian Holeman, Moderator of the Thirtieth General Synod  
Marvin Morgan, Moderator of the Twenty-Seventh General Synod

Merlyn Lawrence, Moderator of the Twenty-Sixth General Synod  
Nancy Taylor, Moderator of the Twenty-Third General Synod  
John Krueger, Moderator of the Fifteenth General Synod  
Former Executive of the Office for Church in Society, Yvonne Delk;  
Former Executive of the Office of Communication, Arthur Cribbs;  
Former President of United Church Funds, Don Hart;  
Two Former Officers and Executive Ministers of Justice Witness Ministries Bernice Powell  
Jackson (and her husband Franklyn) and Linda Jaramillo;  
Former Associate General Minister, Edith Guffey;  
Former General Minister and President, Geoffrey Black (and his wife Pat)

Rushan thanked the honored guests and with acclamation from the Thirty-Fourth General Synod granted voice to the guests.

**23-GS-06 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ granted voice to the honored guests by consensus.

### **3. INTRODUCTION OF ECUMENICAL GUESTS**

Rushan called on Mark Pettis, the Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Minister, to introduce the Ecumenical Guests and Partners.

Mark welcomed the following guests and partners:

Kerri Parker, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Council of Churches and the recipient of the Avery D. Post Ecumenical Award;

Tarunjit Singh Butalia, Executive Director of Religions for Peace-USA and the recipient of the Divine Pathways Interfaith Award;

From the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, Terri Hord Owens, General Minister and President;

From the Reformed Church in America, Rev. Chad Farrand;

From the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, Suzanne Dillahunt, Southeast Ohio Diocese;

From the United Church of Canada, Carmen Landsdowne, Moderator, and Michael Blair, General Secretary;

From Iglesia Evangelica Unida de Puerto Rico, Eduardo Rivera and Angel Cepeda;

From the National Council of Churches, Vashti Murphy McKenzie, President and General Secretary;

From the World Council of Churches, Nathan Day Wilson, who directs institutional and program planning, staff development, evaluation, reporting and fundraising;

From the World Communion of Reformed Churches, Phillip Tanis, of the General Secretariat; and

From Christian Churches Together, Monica Schaap-Pierce, Executive Director who will be joining us on Sunday.

Hearing no objection, these guests are granted voice at this Thirty-Fourth General Synod.

**23-GS-07 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ granted voice to the honored guests by consensus.

#### **4. INTRODUCTION OF INTERNATIONAL PARTNER GUESTS AND MISSION GO-WORKERS**

Rushan called on Karen Georgia Thompson to introduce and welcome the international partner guests and mission co-workers.

Karen Georgia called on LaMarco Cable, President of the Division of Overseas Ministries, and Co-Executive for Global Ministries, which is the common witness of The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ.

#### **From Africa**

Cyril G. K. Fayose, General Secretary of the Christian Council of Ghana;  
Keziah Kargbo, General Secretary of the Council of Churches in Sierra Leone;  
John Matiza, General Secretary of the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe;

#### **From East Asia and the Pacific**

Terumi Kataoka, representing the Aizu Radiation Information Center in Japan;  
Tafue Molu Lusama, Director of the Institute for Climate Indigenous Knowledge at the Pacific Theological College in Fiji;

#### **From Europe**

Olga Matthaiou, Member of the Board of Directors of Perichoresis, from the Evangelical Church of Greece;

#### **From Latin America and the Caribbean**

Blanca Puma, Executive Director of the Ecumenical Foundation for Integral Development; Education and Capacity Building (FEDICE) in Ecuador;

Luis Jara, Executive Assistant, Ecumenical Foundation for Integral Development, Education and Capacity Building (FEDICE) in Ecuador;  
Miguel Tomás Castro García, General Pastor of the Emmanuel Baptist Church in El Salvador;

### **From the Middle East**

Paul Haidostian, Chair of the Central Committee of the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East, President of Haiganzian University, and President for the Evangelical Family of the Middle East Council of Churches, from Beirut, Lebanon; and

### **From Southern Asia**

Juliate Keya Malakar, Executive Director of the Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh.

Karen Georgia moved that the International Partner Guests be granted voice without vote for the duration of General Synod.

Hearing no objection, the Assistant Moderator granted the International Partner Guests voice without vote at the Thirty-Fourth General Synod.

**23-GS-08 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christs grants voice to the International Partner Guests.

Karen Georgia Thompson introduced Miguel Garcia, who offered a word of greeting on behalf of the International Guests.

Miguel Garcia indicated that there are three mission co-workers present at General Synod:

Ricardo Mayol serves as regional consultant for RECONPAZ, the Ecumenical Christian Council of Guatemala;

Phyllis Byrd is the director of “Just Communities,” at the Organization of Africa Instituted Churches (OAIC) in Kenya and is coordinator of the young adult volunteer program with the Presbyterian Church of East Africa; and

Lydia Yang serves in the general office and at the National Church Women’s Association of the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea.

The mission co-workers were thanked for their service on behalf of the global partners.

Rushan invited the General Synod to view the Wider Church Ministries video.

(Video)

## **5. INTRODUCTION OF CONSENSUS DECISION MAKING**

Assistant Moderator Rushan Sinnaduray introduced the General Synod to consensus decision making and led the General Synod in exercises using the process.

**6. NOMINATION AND SPEECH OF GENERAL MINISTER AND PRESIDENT**

Rushan introduced Rodney Franklin and Dale Bonds (via video) to introduce and nominate the candidate for General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ.

Rodney Franklin moved to nominate Karen Georgia Thompson as the candidate for General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ.

Karen Georgia Thompson accepted the nomination and addressed the General Synod.

Rushan indicated that the nomination of Karen Georgia Thompson is before the Thirty-Fourth General Synod and the election would be held on Monday morning.

**7. ANNOUNCEMENTS INCLUDING REPORT FROM THE BUSINESS COMMITTEE ON THE DISPOSITION OF NEW BUSINESS.**

Rushan indicated that there was no new business to come before the Business Committee.

**8. RECESS**

**Saturday morning, July 1, 2023  
Third Plenary Session**

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND SPONSOR RECOGNITION**

The Moderator, Bob Sandman, called the Third Plenary Session of the General Synod to Order, thanked the Insurance Board and Phillips Theological Seminary for their generous support, and announced it was time for Speak Out.

**2. SPEAK OUT!**

1. Jess Chancey (UCC Disabilities Ministries) spoke in support of the United Church of Christ Disabilities Network.
2. Mark Koyama (New Hampshire Conference) spoke in support of the Sacred Ally Quilt Network.
3. Ruth Shaver (Southern New England Conference) spoke in support of the Pathways Academic Council.
4. Sheila Harvey (Florida Conference) spoke in support of the Just Peace Network and extended invitation to the book signing for "Messages of Hope."
5. Richard Fluechtling (S. California-Nevada Conference) spoke in support of the Bloom in the Desert UCC and its search for an Intentional Interim Minister.
6. Izzy Harbin (Indiana-Kentucky Conference) spoke in support of recovery meetings, offered during General Synod in the Community Care Room.



7. Jonathan Bradner (Heartland Conference) spoke about the lack of Open and Affirming churches.
8. Jackson Pyne (Penn Northeast Conference) spoke regarding the UCC partnering with Bible Mission Schools in Africa.
9. Ed Heilman (Heartland Conference) spoke about contemplative action and spiritual practice and an invite to participate during General Synod.
10. Kim Nagy (Heartland Conference) spoke about the Association of Church Educators and Faith Formation.

### **3. WELCOMING NEW CHURCHES**

Bob invited Tracy Howe, Team Leader, Faith Education, Innovation, and Formation, Justice and Local Church Ministries, to welcome new churches and congregations that have joined the United Church of Christ since the last General Synod.

Video presentation of the list of the following churches.

1. En Vivo Church - Michigan Conference
2. Everett Marshallese UCC JRD - Pacific Northwest Conference
3. First Samoan Congregational Christian Church Toafa O Le Talalelei EFKAS - Southwest Conference
4. Giving Circle Church - Hawaii Conference
5. IUC Ministries Rios de Agua Viva (Joy Like A River, UCC) - Michigan Conference
6. Love Church - Vermont Conference
7. New Hope United Church of Christ - Southwest Conference
8. Open Table UCC - Penn Southeast Conference
9. Rise UCC - Michigan Conference
10. The Beloved Community, UCC - Michigan Conference
11. The Gathering UCC - Michigan Conference
12. Tuscaloosa New Church Start - Southeast Conference
13. United Church of Christ Pohnpei, Hilo - Hawaii Conference
14. Whosoever Ministry UCC - Michigan Conference

Bob thanked the presenters and welcomed the new churches.

### **4. CHURCH BUILDING AND LOAN FUND PRESENTATION**

Bob welcomed Patrick Duggan, Executive Director of Local Church Ministries Church Building and Loan Fund, for a special presentation regarding the 170th anniversary of the oldest financial ministry of the United Church of Christ, the Church Building and Loan Fund.

Bob thanked the presenters for the important work being done within the United Church of Christ.

5. **LIVING INTO GOD’S ECONOMY: CELEBRATING THE 170TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST BUILDING & LOAN FUND (CB&LF)**

The Moderator indicated that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ would bring the first of many resolutions before the General Synod and reviewed the Standing Rules.

The Moderator called on Cameron Barr, Chair of the Business Committee, to introduce the first resolution, a Prudential Resolution.

Cameron moved that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopt the resolution and recommended its approval. Cameron called on Patrick Duggan, Executive Director of the Church Building and Loan Fund, to speak to the Resolution.

The Moderator moved without objection to grant voice to Patrick Duggan for the purpose of addressing the resolution.

**23-GS-09 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christs grants voice to Patrick Duggan.

Patrick addressed the resolution. Following the presentation, Bob called for discussion.

There was no discussion.

**23-GS-10 VOTED:** The Moderator declared the Resolution, Living into God's Economy: Celebrating the 170th anniversary of the United Church of Christ Building and Load Fund (CB&LF), approved by unanimous consent.

**LIVING INTO GOD’S ECONOMY:  
CELEBRATING THE 170<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST CHURCH BUILDING & LOAN FUND (CB&LF)**  
**A Prudential Resolution**

**TEXT OF RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, the United Church of Christ Church Building & Loan Fund (CB&LF), as the first and one of the nation’s premier faith-focused funds has leveraged its nearly two centuries of church real estate financing to advance the moral imperatives of the Gospel; and

**WHEREAS**, since CB&LF was founded in 1853, it has provided thousands upon thousands of congregations and other faith-based organizations with real estate financing, operational resources and expertise needed to build stable, thriving communities that live the Gospel mission; and

**WHEREAS**, CB&LF continues to advance God’s Economy through innovative uses of buildings and space, inventive church operating models, revenue-generating faith enterprises and the use of impact-driven metrics; and

**WHEREAS**, at the close of 2021, CB&LF had eighty active loans to congregations totaling \$47,178,505; and

**WHEREAS**, CB&LF builds the capacity of faith leaders and organizations with resources and training that help promote stabilization, transformation and innovation in churches and communities; and

**WHEREAS**, CB&LF is raising up and equipping entrepreneurial leadership for missional community and church connections through the Adese Fellowship program, in partnership with other ministries of the National Setting of the United Church of Christ; and

**WHEREAS**, CB&LF was foundational in the creation of the UCC Cornerstone Fund, also the early financial support of Convergence (formerly the Center of Progressive Renewal) and became a primary investor in Just Like Family Home Care, a home healthcare business initiative in collaboration with the United Church of Canada; and

**WHEREAS**, CB&LF has advocated for and led the way in investing for impact by becoming in 2013, the first financial ministry in the United Church of Christ to adopt an impact investing policy, thereby pledging to invest 100% of its endowment for ministry, mission, environmental, social, or economic justice returns along with financial returns; and

**WHEREAS**, CB&LF since 2014 has on behalf of churches for whom it has consulted on capital campaigns gifted almost \$200,000 of its fees to ministries and charitable organizations across the United States including \$77,744 to Our Church’s Wider Mission; and

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ recognizes with thanksgiving the work and ministry of the United Church of Christ Church Building & Loan Fund throughout the years and today helping the church live into God’s economy.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages all settings of the UCC to view the Award Winning CB&LF documentary film, “It Takes a Village” that tells the story of how CB&LF worked with St. Peter’s UCC and its affiliate MOLO Village Community Development Corporation to build the Village @ West Jefferson, the first new building project in this Louisville community in decades, creating 100 local jobs and bringing the first restaurant, credit union, coffee shop, health care institute, and day care facility, community around St. Peter’s UCC in Louisville KY.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod commends CB&LF and its financial, educational, and capacity building programs to churches, conferences, and religious institutions for the transformation of communities and congregations toward a just world for all.

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ lauds CB&LF's goal to raise \$100 Million from investors, financial institutions, philanthropic organizations and others for church real estate development, flexible financing for church operational capacity, seed funding for transformative ministry initiatives and financing for creative spiritual ventures, to help churches and Christian organizations to Plan, Raise, Finance and Build God's economy.

**FUNDING:** The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

**IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

**6. ANTIONETTE BROWN AWARD**

The Moderator introduced the video celebrating the 2023 recipients of the Antoinette Brown Award. Tara Barber, Sheila Harvey and Audrey Price presented Antionette Brown Awards to Lisa Maxine Goods, and Rebecca Voelkel.

(Video)

Bob thanked the recipients for their ministries and congratulated them on a well-deserved award.

**7. FINANCIAL MINISTRIES VIDEO PRESENTATION**

Bob invited the General Synod to view the video presentation from the Financial Ministries of the United Church of Christ.

(Video)

The Moderator thanked all the financial ministries for the important role played in the life of the United Church of Christ.

**8. MUSIC/STRETCH BREAK**

**9. STATE OF THE CHURCH ADDRESS**

The Moderator invited John Dorhauer, General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ, to bring the State of the Church Address. John Dorhauer provided the State of the Church address and brought a message of thanksgiving for the most gratifying experience in ministry ever.

(Live and Video Clips)

**10. RECOGNITION OF GENERAL MINISTER AND PRESIDENT**

Bob invited Cameron Barr, Chair of the Business Committee, to help recognize and celebrate John Dorhauer's ministry.

Cameron Barr thanked John Dorhauer for eight years of faithful service as General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ and presented a leather-bound copy of John's podcast "Into the Mystic."

(Video Clips)

## **11. THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION**

Bob called on Ray Jordan and Amy Brooks to introduce the Theological Reflections of General Synod.

Ray Jordan and Amy Brooks indicated that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod Reflections would come in the form of Living Psalms.

Bob thanked the theological reflectors for their reflections.

## **12. KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

Bob called on Rachel Chapman to introduce the morning's Keynote Speaker, Nadia Bolz Weber.

Nadia Bolz Weber offered reflections on spirituality and faith friendship and community; life purpose and activism, self-care, shame and the body; recovery and self-awareness, sex and intimacy, health and wellness, and leadership and authority. Nadia concluded the presentation with a question-and-answer period.

## **13. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The attendance count for the 34th General Synod is as follows:  
2,013 Total: Registered; 77 Associate Delegates; 737 Delegates; 857 Visitors; 264 Staff; and 78 Vendors.

## **14. RECESS**

**Monday morning, July 3, 2023**  
**Fourth Plenary Session**

### **1. MORNING DEVOTION**

The Moderator, Bob Sandman, invited Chantelle Armstead (Southern Conference) to offer the morning devotion.

### **2. CALL TO ORDER AND SPONSOR RECOGNITION**

Bob called the Fourth Plenary of the Thirty-Fourth General Synod to order and invited the General Synod to watch a word from The Pension Boards and The Pilgrim Press.

(Video)

Bob thanked the sponsors for their generous support.

### **3. SPEAK OUT!**

The Moderator recognized the following Speak Out! participants:

1. Drew Terry (Southwest Conference) spoke against the Supreme Court Decision of June 22 about water injustice in Arizona.
2. Tom Warren (Southern Conference) spoke about promoting the Cuba Study Seminar.
3. Charlotte Frantz (Minnesota Conference) spoke about several ministry positions at Peace UCC in Duluth Minnesota.
4. Marty Swaim (Central Atlantic Conference) spoke in favor of confronting White Supremacy and support of Resolution 14.
5. Amelia Edson (Maine Conference) spoke about the need for better childcare at General Synod and the importance of being fully inclusive.
6. Tom Ressler (Missouri Mid-South Conference) recognized Loren Cope, who is attending Loren's 26th General Synod.
7. Bonnie Bates (Penn Northeast Conference) spoke out to promote the book, "Hear Us Out, Questions on Belonging and Belief," about how faith impacts young people.
8. Charles Kuthuru (Penn Southeast Conference) spoke out against attacks on the marginalized minorities from India.
9. David Denham (Central Atlantic Conference) spoke in favor of lifting the UCC's connections with Jackie Robinson.
10. Allyson Abrams (Central Atlantic Conference and the Disability Ministries) spoke in favor of lifting up WISE certification.

Bob thanked the participants and announced that the next Speak Out! would be at the afternoon Plenary and sign-up would take place immediately following the current plenary.

### **4. THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION**

Bob called on Ray Jordan for the morning theological reflection.

### **5. ELECTION OF GENERAL MINISTER AND PRESIDENT**

Bob called on Cameron Barr, Chair of the United Church of Christ Board, to move the election of Karen Georgia Thompson as General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ.

Cameron offered a prayer and called on Noah Brewer-Wallin, chair of the Search Committee, to make the motion.

Noah Brewer-Wallin indicated that on March 4, 2023, the United Church of Christ Board nominated for election by the Thirty-Fourth General Synod the selection of its Search Committee, Karen Georgia Thompson, for a term as General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ and submitted its nomination for consideration by delegates to the Thirty-Fourth General Synod. Noah Brewer-Wallin spoke to the motion.

Bob called for discussion.

Discussion:

Nicole Jackson (Penn Southeast Conference) Spoke Against  
Jamie Lee Sprague-Ballow (S. California/Nevada Conference) Spoke in Favor  
John Gage (Southern New England Conference) Spoke Against  
Wryen Kiwaha (Hawaii Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Ira Kelly Shifflett (Penn Central Conference) Spoke Against  
Andrea Vassell (Central Atlantic Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Jess Chancey (Disability Ministries) Spoke in Favor  
Bertrice Wood (Heartland Conference) Spoke in Favor

## **6. MOTION TO END DEBATE**

Sheila Harvey (Florida Conference) moved to call the question and end debate.

The Motion was seconded.

**23-GS-11 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to end debate.

## **MOTION CARRIED**

Bob called on General Synod to vote on the Motion to elect Karen Georgia Thomson as General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ.

**23-GS-12 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to elect Karen Georgia Thompson as General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ.

**MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 626 Yes; 43 No; 7 Abstain)**

**Secretary's Note: Requires 60% affirmative vote**

Bob: Karen Georgia Thompson, you have been elected General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ. May God pour abundant blessings upon your ministry.

Bob congratulated Karen Georgia Thompson and invited Nathan Day Wilson of the World Council of Churches, and Karen Georgia Thompson and her family to the stage for congratulations.

**7. ELECTION OF UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST BOARD, GENERAL SYNOD XXXV MODERATOR AND ASSISTANT MODERATOR, AND GENERAL SYNOD NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

Bob indicated the next order of business was the elections for various offices of the Church.

First, the election of twelve members, or one-third of the at-large membership, to the United Church of Christ Board. The names and biographies of the nominees selected by the General Synod Nominating Committee were posted for delegate review on the General Synod website, and their names were placed before the body by the General Synod Nominating Committee on Friday afternoon. The motion to elect these individuals comes from a committee of the General Synod and requires no second.

Bob called for discussion.

There was no discussion.

**23-GS-13 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to elect the slate of candidates for the United Church of Christ Board.

**MOTION CARRIED**

Bob indicated the nominees for election to the General Synod Nominating Committee would be considered. Four members to be elected to the Nominating Committee, all nominated by the United Church of Christ Board, on the advice of its Governance Committee. The names and biographies have been posted since April 2023. The motion comes from the United Church of Christ Board and needs no second.

Bob called for discussion.

There was no discussion.

**23-GS-14 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to elect the slate of candidates for the Nominating Committee.

**MOTION CARRIED**

Bob indicated the next order of business was the election of the Moderator of the Thirty-Fifth General Synod. It was the stated intent of the writers of the new governance structure that there would be a graduation of leadership in this position, that the Assistant Moderator from one biennium would be elected as Moderator for the next biennium. Accordingly, the General Synod Nominating Committee has selected Rushan Sinnaduray of the Missouri-Mid South Conference



for election as Moderator of the Thirty-Fifth General Synod. Rushan's name was placed before the General Synod on Friday. The motion comes from a committee of the General Synod and needs no second.

Bob called for discussion.

There was no discussion.

**23-GS-15 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to elect Rushan Sinnaduray as Moderator of the Thirty-Fifth General Synod.

### **MOTION CARRIED**

Bob announced that the nominee for Assistant Moderator of the Thirty-Fifth General Synod was Jean Avison of the Central Pacific Conference. Jean's name was placed before the body on Friday afternoon. This nomination comes from a committee of the General Synod and needs no second.

Bob called for discussion.

There was no discussion.

**23-GS-16 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to elect Jean Avison as the Assistant Moderator of the Thirty-Fifth General Synod.

### **MOTION CARRIED**

## **8. A RESOLUTION URGING PLANNING FOR AND IMPLEMENTING ELECTRIFICATION**

Bob indicated that the next order of business would be Committee reports. Bob reminded the General Synod of the Standing Rules and microphone instructions and also thanked the Committee Process Facilitators, Roy Mosley, from the N. California-Nevada Conference, Dennis Frische-Mouri from the Indiana-Kentucky Conference, Susan Townsley, from the Maine Conference, Caroline Belsom from the Hawaii Conference, and David Anderson and Kevin Peterson, both of the Pacific Northwest Conference.

Bob called on Mary Newcomb (Illinois Conference) and the chair of Committee #4 to speak to a Resolution Urging Planning for and Implementing Electrification. Mary Newcomb reviewed the background and history of the Motion and moved the adoption of the proposed resolution and recommended its approval as amended.

Bob indicated the Resolution is a Resolution of Witness and requires a two-thirds majority.

The Moderator called for discussion.

Discussion:

Jill Warner (Minnesota Conference) Spoke Against  
Clara Sims (Southwest Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Terry Parrish (Southern Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Beverly Obert (Illinois Conference) Spoke Against  
Tanya Sadagopan (Wisconsin Conference) Spoke Against  
Kirk Johnson (Central Atlanta Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Kaylie Lee (Southern New England Conference) Spoke in Favor

**9. MOTION TO END DEBATE**

Staci Cooper (Missouri Mid-South Conference) moved to call the question and end debate.

The Motion was seconded.

**23-GS-17 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to end Debate.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**23-GS-18 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the Resolution Urging Planning for, and Implementing Electrification as amended in Committee.

**MOTION CARRIED (Vote 574 Yes; 86 No; 13 Abstain)**

**RESOLUTION URGING PLANNING FOR AND IMPLEMENTING  
ELECTRIFICATION**  
**A Resolution of Witness**

**TEXT OF THE RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, the major 2018 report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change told us that we must reduce carbon emissions 50% by 2030 in order to avoid the most catastrophic effects of climate change, a widely accepted benchmark; and

**WHEREAS**, when we fully ground ourselves in God's word, we understand that this is God's earth that scientists are talking about, and the Twenty-Sixth General Synod has recognized that the earth belongs to God; and

**WHEREAS**, God's earth could be catastrophically impacted by the climate change we are causing and the Twenty-Sixth General Synod has recognized that the earth is affected by climate change; and

**WHEREAS**, protecting God's creation also protects all God's people by reducing air pollutants and sickness; and

**WHEREAS**, because air pollutants from burning fossil fuels are especially harmful for children, the elderly, rural and under-resourced communities, and people of color protection measures must be just and equitably available; and

**WHEREAS**, God's word as set out in Genesis, Leviticus, Mark, Mathew, and Luke leave no doubt about what is required of a steward, to care for God's land while in our temporary tenancy; and

**WHEREAS**, about 40% of the United States' emissions causing climate change come from the places we live and the vehicles we drive and those emissions are increasing and

**WHEREAS**, our electricity is getting cleaner with the addition of very inexpensive wind- and solar-generated electricity and electricity will continue to get even cleaner as expensive coal-fired electric generation is retired; and

**WHEREAS**, the Inflation Reduction Act strongly supports clean electricity with significant funding and strongly supports and funds electrification, storage, and solar for low and middle income people, and

**WHEREAS**, God calls on each of us and all of us together in community to act prophetically, to be role models, to be the Moses of our time, and

**WHEREAS**, our church communities can lead the way to protect God's earth and its people by electrifying and helping our members and neighbors electrify;

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that, as one of the ways to protect all of God's creation from climate changing emissions, the Thirty-Fourth General Synod encourages United Church of Christ congregations and individuals to actively plan for and promote electrifying fossil-fueled space heating and cooling equipment, appliances and machines when old ones fail or become outdated or replacing outdated or failing electric space heating and cooling equipment, appliances and machines with new, far more efficient, electric ones, and to become role models for electrification for individual members and the broader community; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod acknowledges the challenges of electrification for certain locations and settings and trusts the guidance of the Holy Spirit as each congregation and individual considers the practicality, or lack thereof, for their setting while still following the heart of the resolution; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod urges United Church of Christ congregations to actively promote and advocate for electrification as one of the ways to protect all of God's creation, and, with environmental justice in mind, help our communities electrify; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod requests Conferences and Associations of the United Church of Christ to gather and distribute information and guidance for their local congregations and individual members necessary and helpful to implement electrification, thereby becoming role models for the broader community.

**FUNDING:** For the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

**IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

**POINT OF PRIVILEGE**

Fred Breuning (Vermont Conference) urged the delegates to be sparing in their use of Calling the Question to give more time for more of the delegates to be heard.

**10. FAITHFUL ADVOCACY FOR INTERSECTIONAL AND TRANSFORMATIONAL HEALING IN HARM REDUCTION**

Bob called on Gretchen Deeg of the Northern Plains Conference and the chair of Committee #5 to speak to the resolution Faithful Advocacy for Intersectional and Transformational Healing in Harm Reduction. Gretchen Deeg reviewed the background and history of the Motion and moved the adoption of the proposed resolution and recommended its approval as amended.

The Moderator called for Discussion.

Discussion:

Dan Tucker (ONA) Spoke Against  
Melinda Love (Missouri Mid-South) Spoke in Favor  
Cole Marshall (Minnesota Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Matthew Hogue-Smith (Southern New England Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Davi Wesley (Pacific Northwest Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Nathan Patti (Southern New England Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Jill Olinger (Indiana-Kentucky Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Hawley Brown (Southern New England Conference) Spoke in Favor  
James Matarazzo (Illinois Conference) Spoke in Favor

**POINT OF PRIVILEGE**

Bonnie Bates (Penn Northeast Conference) Requests respect for others and to hold applause.

Terry Yasuko (Southern New England Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Mimi Goodwin (Minnesota Conference) Spoke in Favor

**11. MOTION TO END DEBATE**

Suzanne Schwarz-Green (Penn Southeast Conference) moved to call the question and end debate.

The Motion was seconded.

**23-GS-19 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to end debate.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**23-GS-20 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopted the Resolution entitled Faithful Advocacy for Intersectional and Transformational Healing in Harm Reduction as amended in Committee.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**FAITHFUL ADVOCACY FOR INTERSECTIONAL AND TRANSFORMATIONAL  
HEALING IN HARM REDUCTION**

**A Resolution of Witness**

**TEXT OF THE RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, more than 932,000 people have died since 1999 from a drug overdose, and during 2021, more than 108,000 overdose deaths were recorded in the United States, an increase of 15% from the almost 94,000 overdose deaths during 2020.

**WHEREAS**, increases in drug overdose deaths are disproportionately affecting Black and Indigenous people in the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, fatal overdoses increased by 44% among Black people in 2020 compared with the year prior and rises in fatal drug overdose among American Indian and Alaska Native people — together saw a 39% increase over the previous year.

**WHEREAS**, U.S. drug policy drives the number of drug overdoses and overdose fatalities with the promotion of policy which centers the criminalization of people who use drugs, is rooted in racism, punishment, and harsh enforcement measures which fuel social marginalization, health inequities and crises, and mass incarceration. More people are sent to prison in the United States for nonviolent drug offenses than for crimes of violence, and Black men are sent to state prison on drug charges at 13 times the rate of white men.

**WHEREAS**, structural barriers to compassionate, evidence-based, non-coercive, and culturally responsive care and treatment for substance use related health concerns, and substance use disorder, such as stigma, lack of services which address substance use across the spectrum, lack of healing centered engagement, lack of culturally sensitive services, and limitations imposed on prescribers/medical providers, means that many people who use drugs fall beyond the continuum of care.

**WHEREAS**, the stigmatization of people with lived and living experience of substance use and overdose fosters isolation, disconnection, and reinforces the narrative of substance use as a moral, sinful, individual issue rather than the complex, collective, psycho-social-spiritual-health issue that it is.

**WHEREAS**, pregnant and parenting people with lived experience of substance use face barriers to care, including threats of family separation, criminalization of substance use, and lack of access to culturally responsive, full-spectrum reproductive and other health care.

**WHEREAS**, migrant communities experience a significant burden of harm from the war on people who use drugs, including profiling based on race, intrusive government surveillance, anti-immigrant violence, and elevated rates of detention and deportation, for low-level, non-violent drug related offenses. According to Human Rights Watch, deportations of non-citizens who had been convicted of drug possession increased 43 percent during a five-year period.

**WHEREAS**, congregations and diverse settings of the United Church of Christ have been invited to adopt Just World Covenants to strengthen their engagement in building justice through their “ministry, mission, and witness” such as W.I.S.E (Welcoming Inclusive Supportive Engaged), Open and Affirming, and Immigrant Welcoming, among others.

**AND WHEREAS**, adopting a covenant to become a harm reduction engaged congregation or community is a way of demonstrating commitment to live out the Gospel as expressed in the values of Harm Reduction and to bring about healing and justice for communities impacted by drug overdose and the war on people who use drugs, especially in communities of color.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages United Church of Christ congregations to adopt covenants which commit to harm reduction values and practices and build communities of compassionate care, hospitality, and advocacy in partnership with people with lived experience of substance use and overdose, and their loved ones.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages congregations, associations, and conferences to work to eradicate drug-related stigma and dehumanization of people with lived and living experience of substance use and overdose, educate themselves on harm reduction and intersectional justice issues impacting people who use drugs and people who have experienced an overdose.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages advocacy by all settings of the church for broader and more just access to harm reduction services and programming including, but not limited to: syringe access programs, overdose prevention programs, expanded naloxone (medication to reverse opioid overdose) access and distribution, overdose prevention centers, access to evidence-based drug treatment, healing centered engagement, access to medication for all substance use disorders, as well as funding to support these harm reduction services.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ requests that the United Church of Christ Board establish an annual Harm Reduction Justice Sunday to be observed on the third Sunday of August, in advance of International Overdose Awareness Day - August 31st.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon the United Church of Christ Board to compile and maintain a list of materials, resources, and policies concerning substance use to be made available to all settings to help in their development and adoption of harm reduction policies.

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages activism and advocacy by all settings of the church for the development and adoption of harm reduction policies grounded in science, compassion, health, and human rights. This policy advocacy should include leadership by people with lived experience of substance use and overdose, and persons most vulnerable to structural violence including, but not limited to: Black, Indigenous, Latiné APIDA (Asian Pacific Islander Desi American), and other people of color, LGBTQIAN+ people, people who are not citizens, people experiencing poverty and people who are housing insecure, people who are incarcerated and with other criminal legal system involvement, people living in rural areas, people who are pregnant, women, young people, veterans and persons with disabilities.

**FUNDING:** The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

**IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

**12. A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR A NEW STUDY BY OUR CHURCH ON OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOLS AND THE BOARDING SCHOOLS IN HAWAII**

The Assistant Moderator, Rushan Sinnaduray, called on Marc Julian Vasques, Chair of Committee #2 to introduce the next resolution.

Marc introduced the resolution and moved that the Thirty-fourth General Synod adopt the Resolution Calling for A New Study by Our Church on Our Relationship with the Indian Boarding Schools and the Boarding Schools in Hawaii, as amended in Committee. Marc also spoke to the Motion and the recommended actions by Committee #2.

Rushan called for discussion.

Discussion:

Wendell Davis (Hawaii Conference) Spoke in Favor

Megan Scarborough (Southern New England Conference) Spoke in Favor

Tom Obrien (Southern New England Conference) Spoke in Favor

Tyler Connoley (Central Pacific Conference and UCCB) Spoke in Favor  
Linda Kaauwai-Iwamoto (Hawaii Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Tarrah Vaupel (Illinois South Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Josann Jenks (Hawaii Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Tulimalefoi Maga (Southwest Conference) Spoke in Favor

**23-GS-21 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopted the Resolution Calling for A New Study by Our Church on Our Relationship with the Indian Boarding Schools and The Boarding Schools in Hawaii, as amended in Committee.

**MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 650 Yes; 12 No; 2 Abstain)**

**A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR A NEW STUDY BY OUR CHURCH ON OUR  
RELATIONSHIP WITH THE INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOLS AND THE BOARDING**

**A Resolution of Witness**

**TEXT OF THE RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, an estimated 15 million Native American Indians have been exterminated in what is known today as the United States of America through policies defined as genocide, and

**WHEREAS**, among the policies of genocide Native American Indians became victims of identity altering education programs, and

**WHEREAS**, the Civilization Fund Act of 1819's intention was to introduce to Native Americans "the habits and arts of civilization" (to force native American Indians to assimilate to White American culture), and

**WHEREAS**, in the decade following 1869 the Christian denominations began to establish boarding schools with the underlying policy to "kill the Indian and save the man," and

**WHEREAS**, one such boarding school was the Hampton Institute, founded by General Samuel Chapman Armstrong, son of A.B.C.F.M. missionaries to Hawai'i Rev. Richard and Clarissa Chapman Armstrong, which opened its doors to Indian students in 1878; and

**WHEREAS**, boarding schools were of paramount significance in the attempted cultural genocide of an entire people, and

**WHEREAS**, the mandatory placement of Indian children in the boarding schools resulted in the loss of hundreds of languages, spiritual beliefs, traditional practices, and the destruction of healthy family life; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2003 the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM), the American Indian organization that is part of the United Church of Christ, submitted a resolution "American Indian Boarding Schools" that was passed by the General Synod but did not result in reparations, and



**WHEREAS**, on September 30, 2021, a “Statement Supporting the Establishment of a Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies” was signed by the following church groups : The Episcopal Church; Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; Franciscan Action Network; Friends Committee on National Legislation; Jesuit Conference Office of Justice and Ecology; Office of Race Relations, Christian Reformed Church of North America; The United Methodist Church—General Board of Church and Society,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Thirty-fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ directs the UCC to thoroughly investigate and disclose its history beginning with the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission (ABCFM) on its work done both with Native American nations and the Hawaiian Kingdom and evaluate what actions will be taken by the United Church of Christ to make amends of moral and legal (both under U.S. laws and under international humanitarian laws) violations that have occurred, and requests that the UCC Board ask for the cooperation of the Association of Hawaiian Evangelical Churches (AHEC) and the Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM) in so doing.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that if the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission (ABCFM) did receive funds from the Indian Civilization Fund Act of 1819, an act of the U.S. government, the investigation shall reveal what effects this had upon the mission of the church, and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** if the investigation reveals moral and legal violations, that the United Church of Christ begin its reparation process by formally apologizing for the harm done to the Native Hawaiians and to the Native American nations connected to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission (ABCFM); and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** if the investigation reveals moral and legal violations, that the United Church of Christ Board propose specific steps in the reparation process and begin the reparation process by formally apologizing for the harm done to the Native Hawaiians and to the Native American nations connected to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission (ABCFM).

**FUNDING:** The funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

**IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries of other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementation body.

13. **A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATORS, ACADEMIC FREEDOM, AND EQUITY EFFORTS IN SCHOOLS**

The Moderator moved without objection to grant voice to Rachel Prior for the reporting on the resolution.

**23-GS-22 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christs grants Voice to Rachel Pryor (Kansas-Oklahoma Conference), by consensus.

Rachel Pryor introduced the Resolution Supporting Public School Educators, Academic Freedom, and Equity Efforts in Schools and noted the changes that had been made in committee.

Rachel Pryor called on Haley Hudler (Southern New England Conference) to make the motion.

Haley Hudler moved on behalf of Committee #10 that the Resolution Supporting Public School Educators, Academic Freedom, and Equity Efforts in Schools be adopted by the Thirty-fourth General Synod as amended in committee. Rachel Pryor then spoke to the Motion.

The Moderator called for discussion.

Discussion:

Michelle Wilkey (Heartland Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Roxanne Tuinstra (Penn West Conference) Spoke Against  
Elizabeth Windmann (Missouri Mid-South Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Gary Kwong (Minnesota Conference) Spoke Against  
Noah Brewer-Wallin (UCCB) Spoke in Favor  
Alice Rauch (Penn Central Conference) Spoke in Favor

#### **14. MOTION TO AMEND THE RESOLUTION**

Roxanne Tuinstra (Penn West Conference) moved to amend the resolution to add the words “to include lay persons” in line 71.

The Motion was seconded.

The Moderator called for discussion on the motion to amend.

Janet Newett (Penn Northeast Conference) Spoke Against  
Patti MacLennan (Southern New England Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Noah Moore (Minnesota Conference) Spoke Against  
John Titus (Penn West Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Gregory Baker (Southern New England Conference) Spoke Against  
Sally Scheib (Illinois Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Vickey Allen (Southern New England Conference) Spoke Against  
Mimi Goodwin (Minnesota Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Dona Roll (New York Conference) Spoke Against

#### **15. MOTION TO END DEBATE**

Scott Paeth (Illinois Conference) moved to call the question and end debate.

The Motion was seconded.

**23-GS-23 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to end debate.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**16. MOTION ON THE ADOPTION OF THE AMENDMENT**

**23-GS-24 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the Amendment to insert in line 71 “be it resolved to include lay persons...”

**MOTION FAILED**

Continued Discussion on the Resolution as presented by the committee.

Guy Sebastian Johnson (MRSEJ) Spoke in Favor

**17. MOTION TO END DEBATE**

Tanya Sadagopan (Wisconsin Conference) moved to call the question and end debate.

The Motion was seconded.

**23-GS-25 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to end Debate.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**23-GS-26 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the Resolution Supporting Public School Educators, Academic Freedom and Equity Efforts in Schools be adopted by the Thirty-Fourth General Synod as amended in committee.

**MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 651 Yes; 13 No; 4 Abstain)**

**A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATORS, ACADEMIC FREEDOM, AND EQUITY EFFORTS IN SCHOOLS**

**A Resolution of Witness**

**TEXT OF THE RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, the United Church of Christ was founded by denominations with education as a central aspect of our identities and has always been a firm advocate for education, with the Church having had a hand in the founding of many colleges and universities, including many

Historically Black Colleges and Universities, which grew from the hundreds of schools founded by the American Missionary Association after the Civil War; and

**WHEREAS**, the United Church of Christ has been committed to being an Open and Affirming, Anti-Racist, Environmental Justice, Just Peace denomination; and

**WHEREAS**, we in the United Church of Christ believe there is “ever more truth and light to be brought forward” from our scriptures, as well as from our world and our people; and

**WHEREAS**, the United Church of Christ has claimed to be a thinking church as well as a feeling and believing church; and

**WHEREAS**, the United Church of Christ has demonstrated its commitment to learning about the sins and legacies of slavery, segregation, Jim Crow laws, immigration quotas, internment camps, boarding schools, anti-miscegenation laws, sodomy laws, discriminatory housing policies, discriminatory healthcare policies, and other practices that have contributed to ongoing disparities of resources and opportunities for oppressed peoples, without fearing the discomfort that can accompany such learning; and

**WHEREAS**, the United Church of Christ has demonstrated its commitment to addressing the sins of violence and oppression experienced by women, LGBTQ+ people, people with disabilities, people of religious minorities, immigrants, refugees, Native American/Indigenous people, Black people, Latinx people, Asian people, and all others who have suffered oppression in this country; and

**WHEREAS**, students benefit greatly from the study of literature and art that addresses the full range of being human; and

**WHEREAS**, proposals to ban discussions of sexual orientation and gender identity in schools send a profoundly negative message of non-acceptance to students whose romantic attraction does not conform to heteronormative assumptions, and to students who may be experiencing gender dysphoria or who have already realized that their real gender does not match that which was assigned at birth and by socialization;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ declares that it is vital for every person, of every race, skin color, culture, religion, language status, gender, sexual orientation, disability, income, and/or family background to be given an opportunity to see themselves and their neighbors represented, to access truthful information, and to learn from our past; so students are better equipped to advocate for, and to reach, their full potential as critical thinkers in school environments that continually strive for equity in all aspects of schooling, from academics and curriculum to extra-curricular activities and school culture;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ affirms support of our public education systems and educators, as well as academic

freedom, and the right of educators to make decisions that are in the best interest of ALL students, consistent with peer-reviewed research and best practice;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ declares that on-going thoughtful evaluation of teaching methodology and content is a necessary part of strengthening our schools, but harassment of teachers, administrators, and school board members is harmful to them, to the schools and educational systems they represent, and, most especially, to the students they serve.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ stands against efforts to inflame the public with hateful rhetoric toward educators; to censor or ban what is taught in public school classrooms; to censor or ban books and media in school libraries; to deny the histories of oppression experienced by marginalized groups; to deny racism, sexism, heterosexism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, ableism, and other forms of prejudice, bias, and hate; and to impose burdensome disclosure mandates related to classroom lessons, assignments, and activities;

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages all settings of the Church to use this resolution for the development of talking points for presentation in public arenas where such matters are being dealt with, including state legislatures, local school boards, parent-teacher associations, ministerial associations, community groups, and the like.

**FUNDING:** The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

**IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

## **18. COUNCIL OF CONFERENCE MINISTERS PRESENTATION**

The Moderator called on Shari Prestemon, Chair of the Council of Conference Ministers, to make a special presentation.

Each of the Conference Ministers offered a one-word prayer for the United Church of Christ.

Bob thanked the Conference Ministers for their service and ministries.

## **19. UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST BY-LAWS AMENDMENTS**

Bob called on Marsha Williams, Chair of the Governance Committee of the United Church of Christ Board, to present the proposed amendments to the United Church of Christ By-Laws. Marsha moved that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopt the proposed amendments to the United Church of Christ By-Laws. The primary effect of the amendment is to change the term of the General Synod from two years to three years.

Bob called for discussion.

Discussion:

Caroline Saxton (Penn Central Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Sally Scheib (Illinois Conference) Spoke Against  
Gary Barraco (Pennsylvania Northeast) Spoke in Favor  
Guy S. Johnson (Central Atlantic Conference) Spoke Against  
John Gage (Southern New England Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Brian Holman (Central Atlantic Conference) Spoke Against  
Wayne Shannon (Wisconsin Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Jeremy Wood (Illinois Conference) Spoke Against  
Jess Peacock (Heartland Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Penny Lowes (Michigan Conference) Spoke Against  
Tim Sylvia (Southern New England Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Mimi Goodwin (Minnesota Conference) Spoke Against

Tanya Sadagopan (Minnesota Conference) asked for clarification about the possibility of separating the motion into how often General Synod would be held and how long Board Members served.

The question was ruled out of order.

Cole Benner-Smith (Southeast Conference) Spoke Against  
Hawley Brown (Southern Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Charles Buck (UCCB & UCF) Spoke Against  
Bree McKee-Miller Miller (Minnesota Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Tarrah Vaupel (Illinois South Conference) Spoke Against  
Dakota Roberts (Indiana-Kentucky Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Ben Mercier (Central Atlantic Conference) Spoke Against  
Shari Prestemon (Minnesota Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Ernest Potter (Illinois Conference) Spoke Against

### **POINT OF PRIVILEGE**

June Boutwell (General Synod Nominating Committee) As chair of the Nominating Committee wanted the General Synod to know that all the Board Nominees were made aware of the possible changes to the By-laws prior to accepting their nomination.

Continued Discussion:

Tony Clark (Montana/Northern Wyoming Conference) Spoke in Favor

The Moderator suspended the debate to consult with the parliamentarian and clarify the earlier question regarding separating the motion regarding frequency of General Synod and United Church of Christ Board Member terms.

Bob called on Hannah Cranbury (UCCB) to speak to the ruling by the Parliamentarian that such an amendment to the Motion is not compliant. Hannah indicated that if the Thirty-Fourth General Synod adopted the current amendments to the By-Laws it did not preclude a By-Laws amendment from being brought before the Thirty-Fifth General Synod addressing term limits for UCCB Members.

Bob, by unanimous consent, declared the Standing Rules of General Synod to be suspended for the purposes of arriving at consensus on the discussion regarding the possibility of a By-Laws amendment at the Thirty-Fifth General Synod.

**23-GS-27 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ by unanimous consent voted to suspend the Standing Rules until further notice.

Bob referred the General Synod to the consensus process introduced earlier and called for a consensus vote using the blue and orange cards on the question: “Are you willing to think about stretching the decision regarding term limits to the Thirty-Fifth General Synod to allow for more input and discussion over the next two years?”

A show of cards indicated that a majority of the delegates were in favor of the question. The Moderator allowed the delegates additional time to continued discussion to determine if a unanimous decision could be reached.

**23-GS-28 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ indicated by consensus that it would be willing to consider an additional revision of the By-Laws at the Thirty-Fifth General Synod.

Hannah Cranbury called on Julia Gaughan (UCCB) to bring a word to the General Synod. Julia indicated as the incoming Chair of the United Church of Christ Board that the Board is committed to revisit the UCCB term and bring a Bylaws amendment to General Synod Thirty-Five.

Bob indicated that the Standing Rules were no longer suspended, and the body would continue with discussion on the Motion.

Bob asked the General Synod to take a few moments for prayer before continuing.

Continued discussion:

Carolyn Call (Penn Central Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Yvette Wynn (Previous UCCB Chair) Spoke in Favor  
Joseph Thornton (Southeast Conference) Spoke Against

## **20. RECESS**

**Monday afternoon, July 3, 2023**  
**Fifth Plenary Session**

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND SPONSOR RECOGNITION**

The Assistant Moderator, Rushan Sinnaduray, called to order the Fifth Plenary of the Thirty-Fourth General Synod.

Rushan called on Charles Buck and Matt Wagner to bring greetings from United Church Funds and called attention to the video produced by RSM.

Rushan thanked United Church Funds and RSM for their generous support of this General Synod.

**POINT OF PRIVILEGE**

Kathryn Brown and Ira Kelly Shiflett called on the General Synod to be in prayer for the people the West-Bank of Palestine and Israel due to the invasion by Israel of the West Bank.

Rushan called for a time of silent prayer.

**2. SPEAK OUT!**

The Assistant Moderator announced it was time for Speak Out.

1. Deb McCollister (Nebraska Conference) Spoke about the search for Interfaith Senior Minister at Temple Israel.
2. Sandra Swayman (Michigan Conference) Spoke about Re-Member 25 Year Celebration in Minneapolis, Minnesota.
3. Stephen King (Missouri Mid-South Conference) Spoke about lifting up rural church service staff.
4. Stephanie Perdew (Minnesota Conference) Spoke about the Damascus Project On-Line learning.
5. David Foy Crabtree (Southern New England Conference) Spoke on promoting environmental concerns
6. Timothy Murphy (Indiana-Kentucky Conference) Spoke on promoting children's book, entitled, Jesus Learns to Glow.
7. Bishop Samuel (Church of South India) Spoke about requesting prayer for the challenges going on in the country of India and Church of South India and strengthening their UCC bond.
8. Darrell Goodwin (Southern New England Conference and UCCB) Spoke about encouraging gay leadership in ministry.
9. Shannon Garrett-Doege (Penn West Conference) Spoke because there is still much work to do.
10. Julie Mavity Maddalena (Wisconsin Conference) Spoke to promote the course work of Lakeland undergraduate programs in social justice.



**3. RECOGNITION OF GENERAL MINISTER AND PRESIDENT SEARCH COMMITTEE**

Rushan called on Noah Brewer-Wallin, Chair of the General Minister and President Search Committee, to recognize the members of the Search Committee.

Noah Brewer-Wallin called the following members of the GMP Search Committee to the stage to receive recognition and thanks from the General Synod:

Lorraine Cenicerros, Jess Chancey, Kenneth Daniels, JJ Flag, Susan Hall, Lisa LeSuer, Guy Sebastian Johnson, Jo Deen Lowe, Richard Hom, Zillah Wesley, and Cameron Barr.

**4. CONTINUATION OF DISCUSSION OF UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST BY-LAWS AMENDMENTS**

The Moderator, Bob Sandman, indicated that discussion of the amendments to the United Church of Christ By-laws would continue.

Karen Routt (N. California/Nevada Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Edith Guffey (Honored Guest) Spoke Against  
Kathy Brown (Penn Central Conference) Spoke in Favor

**5. MOTION TO END DEBATE**

John Titus (Penn West Conference) moved to call the question and end debate.

The Motion was seconded.

Tyler Connoley (Central Pacific Conference and UCCB) indicated that several voting devices had been logged out during the break.

The Moderator indicated that technical support was aware of the problem and was working on it.

**23-GS-29 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to end Debate.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**23-GS-30 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the United Church of Christ Bylaws amendments as presented by the United Church of Christ Board.

**MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 425 Yes; 207 No; 15 Abstain)**

**Secretary's Note: Because of electronic voting issues, the body re-voted in 23-GS-32, which is the official vote.**

## **POINT OF PRIVILEGE**

Diane Schnaars (Penn Northeast Conference) indicated she was unable to vote on the By-laws Amendment and wanted to know if others experienced the same issue.

The Assistant Moderator, Rushan Sinnaduray, indicated that the General Synod would continue with the next Resolution while the technical team fixed the voting problems.

### **6. CALLING ON UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST LOCAL CHURCHES TO WITNESS “A WHITE SUPREMACY-FREE ZONE” & CONFRONTING WHITE SUPREMACY**

Rushan called on Jeannie Hobson (N. California/Nevada Conference) chair of Committee 14 to present on behalf of Committee 14.

Jeannie introduced the resolution and moved on behalf of Committee #14 that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod adopt the resolution calling on the United Church of Christ Local Churches to Witness “A White Supremacy-Free Zone” and Confronting White Supremacy. Jenny Hobson also spoke to the resolution.

The Assistant Moderator called for discussion.

Discussion:

Vivian Jackson (Central Atlantic Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Guy Johnson (Central Atlantic Conference) Spoke Against  
Amanda Hendler-Voss (Central Atlantic Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Marty Kuchma (Central Atlantic Conference and UCC Mental Health Network) Spoke in Favor

Rushan asked how many were still unable to log in to the voting system. Because some were still having problems, a re-vote on the Bylaws would occur this evening.

### **7. MOTION TO AMEND**

Wilbert Watkins (Illinois Conference) moved to amend the resolution following the section, “And Be It Finally Resolved” insert the sentence, “Together, let us unite, challenge systems of oppression, and promote a future of equality and justice, reflecting the love and character of our Creator.”

The amendment was seconded and Wilbert Watkins spoke to the amendment.

## **POINT OF PRIVILEGE**

Grant Carodine (Southeast Conference) requested that the votes of those unable to use the electronic voting process be counted manually so that everyone present would have a vote on the resolution.

The Moderator by unanimous consent declared that those unable to log into the electronic voting system would be granted permission to cast a paper ballot.

**23-GS-31 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ by unanimous consent voted to be grant to those unable to log into the electronic voting permission to cast a paper ballot.

### **POINT OF PRIVILEGE**

Mimi Goodwin (Minnesota Conference and CAIM) stated she was uncomfortable that this General Synod would move on when one person's voice was silenced.

Rushan indicated the Resolution Portion of the Fifth Plenary would be suspended until the technical aspects of the voting could be worked out and we would be moving on with other business.

### **8. HISTORICAL COUNCIL: AFRO-CHRISTIAN CONVENTION**

Rushan called on Carrie Call (Penn Central Conference) to introduce the next video presentation.

Carrie indicated that at the annual meeting of the Historical Council in Cleveland in 2022, the Council passed a resolution affirming the Afro-Christian Convention as the Fifth Stream of the United Church of Christ and indicated that it would have ramifications for how the UCC story is shared in the years to come.

Rushan thanked Carrie and the Historical Council for the continuing work in helping the United Church of Christ not only understand history better but also to tell the story to the world.

Rushan called on John Dorhauer to make an announcement.

John issued an apology to the Afro-Christian Convention and a commitment to celebrate the recognition of the Fifth Stream.

### **POINT OF PRIVILEGE**

Michelle Torigian (Illinois South Conference) asked that everybody take a moment to breathe and let the breath of God surround them.

### **9. RE-VOTE ON AMENDMENT TO UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST BY-LAWS**

**23-GS-32 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the United Church of Christ Bylaws amendments as presented by the United Church of Christ Board.

**MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 454 Yes; 226 No; 6 Abstain)**

**10. CONTINUATION OF DISCUSSION OF RESOLUTION CALLING ON UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST LOCAL CHURCHES TO WITNESS “A WHITE SUPREMACY FREE ZONE” & CONFRONTING WHITE SUPREMACY**

Rushan indicated discussion would continue on the Amendment to the Resolution Calling on United Church of Christ Local Churches to Witness “A White Supremacy-Free Zone” and Confronting White Supremacy and re-read the proposed amendment as follows:

Insert the sentence at the end of the Be It Finally Resolved “Together let us unite, Challenge systems of oppression, and promote a future of equality and justice, reflecting the love and character of our Creator.”

Discussion on amendment continued:

Scott Paeth (Illinois Conference) Spoke in Favor

**23-GS-33 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the amendment to the Resolution Calling on United Church of Christ Local Churches to Witness “A White Supremacy-Free Zone” & Confronting White Supremacy.

**MOTION CARRIED**

Discussion on the resolution continued:

Gary Kwong (Minnesota Conference) Asked for clarification of White Supremacy vs White Privilege.

Jeannie Hobson (N. California/Nevada Conference) Committee chair provided clarification.

Jason Carson Wilson (MRSEJ) Spoke in Favor

Bonnie Bates (Penn Northeast Conference) Spoke in Favor

**23-GS-34 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the Resolution Calling on United Church of Christ Local Churches to Witness “A White Supremacy-Free Zone” & Confronting White Supremacy, as amended.

**MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 625 Yes; 37 No; 16 Abstain)**

**A RESOLUTION CALLING ON UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST LOCAL CHURCHES TO WITNESS “A WHITE SUPREMACY-FREE ZONE” & CONFRONTING WHITE SUPREMACY**

**A Resolution of Witness**

**TEST OF THE RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, Exodus 20:3 admonishes us to “. . . have no other gods before me,” and

**WHEREAS**, Jesus in the Gospel of Luke chapter four teaches us, “It is written, ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him,’” and

**WHEREAS**, as people of faith, rooted in the gospel of justice, we are admonished to tear down the idols that keep us from the simple but true worship of God, and

**WHEREAS**, God created humankind in God’s image and likeness, people are image bearers, sharing equal status as human beings. God did not create race, racism, superior groups of humans, and hierarchical and hegemonic social structures, and

**WHEREAS**, the Nineteenth General Synod, 1993, passed a Statement of Christian Conviction of the Proposed Pronouncement Calling the United Church of Christ to be a Multiracial and Multicultural Church. The call to be a multiracial and multicultural church is an acknowledgement that racial justice is the inclusiveness of all humans and never excludes anyone based on skin color, culture or ethnic origin, and

**WHEREAS**, the Twenty-Fifth General Synod, 2003, addressed white supremacy through calling on the United Church of Christ Called to be an Anti-Racist Church, and

**WHEREAS**, the Thirty-First General Synod, 2017, Affirming and Supporting the Authorized Ministries of Under-Represented Clergy in Local Congregations: A Call for Greater Representation and Economic Justice, and

**WHEREAS**, the Thirty-First General Synod, 2017, addressing white supremacy through calling On Establishing Procedures for Cultural Diversity Training for Authorized Ministers, and

**WHEREAS**, for a local church to declare their communities and settings as “A White Supremacy-Free Zone” is to take away the quiet existence of racism and white idolatry and forces the issue into the communities in which UCC houses of worship exist, and

**WHEREAS**, for a local church to publicly express that “We are confronting white supremacy,” forces the discussion and action to end white supremacy, and

**WHEREAS**, God has not given us a spirit of fear, but the spirit of power, of courage and resolution, to meet difficulties and dangers; the spirit of love which will carry us through opposition.” 2 Timothy 1:7, and

**WHEREAS**, it is time for the White Church to experience its own Damascus Road Story – to have an “Aha!” moment that transforms our local congregations and denomination away from unjust and unholy political, economic, and social structures that degrade people of color as inferior and are supported by European-centered theology, and

**WHEREAS**, the Damascus Road Story requires a journey of confronting White Supremacy through questions, discussion, study of White Privilege, White Supremacy and Systemic Racism, and then planning for and moving to action to become anti-racist and disrupt racism now, and

**WHEREAS**, the UCC continues to advocate for the dismantling of racism through education, study, policy and action, and

**WHEREAS**, the Potomac Association of the Central Atlantic Conference of the United Church of Christ, supporters of the resolution, have developed a plan for its implementation and calls on UCC local churches to begin the journey of Confronting White Supremacy and becoming a White Supremacy Free Zone, and

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls on all settings of the UCC, including local churches of predominantly European descent and local UCC churches in general, to confront the idolatry of white supremacy, in witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ,

**AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls on UCC local churches of predominantly European descent, and UCC local churches in general, to embark on an intentional journey of public commitment, study, and action to actively construct “A White Supremacy-Free Zone,”

**AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls for action through the implementation of “Journey Towards Confronting White Supremacy and Creating a White Supremacy Free Zone Local Congregation: An Intentional Study and Action Guide to Challenge Racism and White Supremacy,”

**AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages all local churches to participate in the implementation of this resolution, starting wherever they are,

**AND BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls on UCC local churches of predominantly European descent, and UCC local churches in general, to publicly express, “We are confronting white supremacy. Together let us unite, challenge systems of oppression, and promote a future of equality and justice, reflecting the love and character of our Creator.”

**FUNDING:** The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

**IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

**POINT OF PRIVILEGE**

Charlotte Frantz (Minnesota Conference) asked that the General Synod stand in solidarity with John Dorhauer on the recent apology to the Afro-Christian Convention and rejoice in the decision to include the Afro-Christian Convention in our historical documents.

## **11. FINANCIAL REPORT**

Rushan called upon Tami Marinella, Chief Financial Officer of the United Church of Christ to offer the Financial Report.

Tami offered the Financial Report.

Following the report, the Assistant Moderator called upon Derrick Elliott (UCCB, Chair of the Finance and Budget Committee) to present the actions necessary for the adoption of the National Basic Support Allocation Base and Allocation Percentages for the next biennium.

Derrick Elliott moved the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopt the National Basic Support Allocation base of \$3.67 million and \$3.49 million respectively for the budget years 2024 and 2025.

Derrick then spoke to the motion and expressed gratitude for the financial team.

The Moderator, Bob Sandman, called for discussion.

Timothy Murphy (Indiana-Kentucky Conference) Question about expense increase. CFO indicated it was the result of a reallocation of expenses from other categories.

Ernest Potter (Illinois Conference) Question regarding end of fiscal year and the timing for approval and a comment on the difficulty in projection funding in the future. CFO indicated final approval was dependent on other entities providing their reports and she agreed that projecting into the future is difficult.

**23-GS-35 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the National Basic Support Allocation base of \$3.67 million and \$3.49 million respectively for the budget years 2024 and 2025.

## **MOTION CARRIED**

Derrick moved to delegate the determination of the percentage allocation of denominational support for the 2024-2025 biennium to the United Church of Christ Board.

The Moderator called for discussion.

Discussion:

Jabe Zino (New York Conference) Asked for clarification of what was being voted on.

**23-GS-36 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to delegate the determination of the percentage allocation of denominational support for the 2024-2025 biennium to the United Church of Christ Board.

## **MOTION CARRIED**

### **12. MOVEMENT MAKERS AWARD**

The Assistant Moderator, Rushan Sinnaduray, called on Traci Blackmon to introduce the recipients of the Movement Makers Award.

(Video Presentation)

Dollie Burwell, Yvonne Delk, Holly McKissick, Cindy Bumb, and Dolly Burrell were honored with the Movement Maker for Justice awards.

### **13. JOIN THE MOVEMENT**

Rushan called on Kent Siladi and Velda Love to report on the “Join the Movement” campaign and to offer a report and an invitation to join one of the exciting initiatives happening in the United Church of Christ.

(Join the Movement Theme & Video)

Rushan thanked Kent Siladi and Velda Love for their presentation.

### **14. RECESS**

**Monday evening, July 3, 2023**  
**Sixth Plenary Session**

### **1. CALL TO ORDER AND SPONSOR RECOGNITION**

The Moderator, Bob Sandman, called to order the Sixth Plenary of the Thirty-fourth General Synod and recognized two General Synod sponsors: Church Building & Loan Fund and Suran Systems.

Patrick Duggan, Executive Director of the Church Building and Loan Fund spoke to the work of the Church Building and Loan Fund and a Video was played from Suran Systems – CDM.

(Video)

Bob thanked the sponsors for their generous support.

### **2. SPEAK OUT!**



1. Haley Hudler (Southern New England Conference) spoke about how adoptions can be forced and unregulated.
2. Marlene Kettell (Maine Conference) spoke about Pilgrim Lodge and other outdoor ministries.
3. Emily Tishear (Indiana-Kentucky Conference) spoke of the Young Ambassadors program between the IDC and Germany.
4. Lakota Iron Rope (Indiana-Kentucky Conference) spoke to provide information about Merom.org for radically inclusive outdoor ministry.
5. Lori Taylor (Illinois Conference) spoke to urge the UCC to look at the inhumane processes in incarceration in relation to the 13th amendment.
6. Jim Antal (Special Advisor on Climate Justice) spoke to invite attendees over the age of 60 to learn more about climate justice through Third Act.
7. David Long-Higgins (Heartland Conference) spoke about the Heartland Conference's congregational curriculum around overdose prevention and the information is available on their website.
8. Angelica Simmons (Southern Conference) spoke about the Founder of League of Black Girls Institute advocating to empower black girls who are punished as a racial and gender issue.
9. Lori Pritt (Heartland Conference) spoke about the need to address mental health issues in preventing suicide.
10. Daniel Tucker (Indiana-Kentucky Conference) spoke to call all churches to promote and become Open and Affirming Congregations and to stop hurting those in the LGBTQIA communities.

### **3. SUSPENSION OF GENERAL SYNOD STANDING RULES**

Cean James (Penn Southeast Conference), moved to suspend the General Synod Standing Rules around the timing of bringing new business to General Synod for action as a result of the late Friday ruling from the U.S. Supreme Court overturning affirmative action in higher education.

The Motion was seconded.

The Moderator, by unanimous consent, declared the Standing Rules of General Synod, as they relate to the timing of submitting new business to General Synod, to be suspended for the purpose of bringing a Motion addressing the U.S. Supreme Court's action returning Affirmative Action and Student Loan Debt.

**23-GS-37 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ by unanimous consent voted to suspend the Standing Rules so that new business can be presented to the General Synod addressing the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling on affirmative action.

### **4. UCC SEMINARIES**

Bob invited everyone to turn their attention to the screens for a video presentation from the UCC Seminaries.

(Video Presentation)

**5. PACIFIC BASIN INITIATIVE LAUNCH**

The Moderator invited Karen Georgia Thompson and LaMarco Cable to introduce an important new initiative that will help the United Church of Christ connect even more deeply with our partners in the Pacific Basin. After a brief presentation and video all were invited to participate in the Pacific Basin Initiative.

**6. SUSPENSION OF GENERAL SYNOD STANDING RULES**

Grant Carodine (Southeast Conference) moved that the General Synod suspend the General Synod Standing Rules regarding the timing of when Minority Resolutions can be introduced to the General Synod.

The Motion was seconded.

The Moderator, by unanimous consent, declared the Standing Rules of General Synod, as they relate to the timing of submitting Minority Resolutions to General Synod, to be suspended for the purpose of bringing a Minority Resolution regarding United Church of Christ Bylaws Amendment vote.

**23-GS-38 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ by unanimous consent suspended the General Synod Standing Rules so that new business can be presented to the General Synod addressing a Minority Resolution.

**7. MINORITY RESOLUTION ON THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST BY-LAWS AMENDMENTS**

A Motion was made to put forth the following Minority Resolution to General Synod for a vote by the Minority.

**WHEREAS**, the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ by a two-thirds majority passed an Amendment to its Bylaws moving the frequency of the General Synod from every two years to every three years, the minority seeks to have its voice formally recorded as a minority resolution.

**THEREFORE** be it resolved that the minority of 226 delegates affirms their objection to this amendment to the bylaws on the basis of, but not limited to the decrease of in-person fellowship that the scripture directs (Hebrews 10:24), stewardship, extended leadership terms and their extensions' impact on leadership opportunities and development in the church.

**FINALLY** we compel the Board of Directors to form a committee tasked with identifying and deploying strategies that support fellowship within and between conferences and with the national setting.

The Moderator called for discussion.

Discussion:

Michelle Torigian (Illinois South Conference) Spoke in Favor

Chuck Pomeranian (Wisconsin Conference) Spoke in Favor

Anna Larson (Minnesota Conference) Spoke in Favor

Kelli Parrish Lucas (Rocky Mountain Conference) Called the Question and was ruled out of order

Jonah Garcia (Florida Conference) Spoke in Favor

## **8. MOTION TO AMEND THE MINORITY RESOLUTION TO THE BYLAWS**

Mimi Goodwin (Wisconsin Conference and CAIM) moved to amend the resolution add as follows: “THEREFORE, be it resolved that the minority of 226 delegates affirms their objection to this amendment to the bylaws on the basis of, but not limited to, the decrease of in-person fellowship that the scripture directs (Hebrews 10:24), stewardship, extended leadership terms and their extensions' impact on leadership opportunities and development in the church, and the ability of Delegates to respond to current events.”

The Motion was seconded.

Mimi Goodwin spoke to the Amendment.

Discussion:

Jeannie Hobson (N. California/Nevada Conference) asking to proceed with consensus rather than a vote.

Janet Newett (Penn Northeast Conference) moved to table the discussion and was ruled out of order.

**23-GS-39 VOTED:** A Minority Vote of the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopted the Amendment to the Motion to include “and the ability of Delegates to respond to current events.”

**MOTION CARRIED (Minority Vote: 193 Yes; 11 No; 4 Abstain)**

Discussion on Minority Resolution as amended:

No discussion.

## **9. MOTION TO END DEBATE**

Bobby Burt (Heartland Conference) Moved to Call the Question and End Debate.

The Motion was seconded.

(NO VOTE ON MOTION TO END DEBATE)

**23-GS-40 VOTED:** A Minority Vote of the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopted the Minority Resolution as amended.

**MOTION CARRIED (Minority Vote: 194 Yes; 5 No; 1 Abstain)**

Text of the Motion as Amended:

**WHEREAS**, the 34th General Synod of the United Church of Christ by a two-thirds majority passed an Amendment to its Bylaws moving the frequency of the General Synod from every two years to every three years, the minority seeks to have its voice formally recorded as a minority resolution.

**THEREFORE** be it resolved that the minority of 226 delegates affirms their objection to this amendment to the bylaws on the basis of, but not limited to the decrease of in-person fellowship that the scripture directs (Hebrews 10:24), stewardship, extended leadership terms and their extensions' impact on leadership opportunities and development in the church and the ability of Delegates to respond to current events.

**FINALLY** we compel the Board of Directors to form a committee tasked with identifying and deploying strategies that support fellowship within and between Conferences and with the National Setting.

### **POINT OF PRIVILEGE**

Jill Olds (Southern New England Conference) is thankful for the diligent work of the delegates but requested to be mindful of time to get through the business.

### **10. CLOSING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE: CALLING ON THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST TO SEEK DIGITAL JUSTICE AND INCLUSION**

Fred Young (Penn Central Conference) introduced the resolution and moved that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopt the resolution, Closing the Digital Divide: Calling on the United Church of Christ to Seek Digital Justice and Inclusion, as submitted. Fred Young also spoke to the Motion.

The Moderator called for discussion.

Discussion:

Terry Yasuko Ogawa (Southern New England Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Timothy Murphy (Indiana-Kentucky Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Catherine Gauthier (N. California/Nevada Conference) Spoke in Favor

Kathryn Brown (Penn Central Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Ellie Smith (Rocky Mountain Conference) Spoke Against  
Douglas Hearn (Penn West Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Fable Perkins (Indiana-Kentucky Conference) Spoke Against

**11. MOTION TO END DEBATE**

Caroline Saxton (Penn Central Conference) moved call the question and end debate.

The Motion was seconded.

**23-GS-41 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to end debate.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**23-GS-42 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the Resolution Closing the Digital Divide: Calling on the United Church of Christ to Seek Digital Justice and Inclusion.

**MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 623 Yes; 12 No; 4 Abstain)**

**CLOSING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE: CALLING ON THE UNITED CHURCH OF  
CHRIST TO SEEK DIGITAL JUSTICE AND INCLUSION**

**A Resolution of Witness**

**TEST OF THE RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, few areas of life are not impacted by digital access and use and there is a growing correlation between quality digital access and use and increased economic, educational, health, labor, and social opportunities and mobility; and

**WHEREAS**, thirty percent of school-age children in the United States (two-thirds of those whose family income is below the federal poverty level) and two-thirds of students globally do not have adequate, reliable internet access at home; and

**WHEREAS**, the COVID pandemic laid bare the injustice of the digital divide, further widening educational, economic, and opportunities gaps between those who have high quality digital access and those who do not; and

**WHEREAS**, the United Church of Christ has long recognized the unique power of media to give meaningful voice to diverse peoples, cultures, and ideas and in so doing to shape society; and,

**WHEREAS**, the ability to use new and evolving technologies is essential for strengthening relationships and building peaceful communities, and especially for the hearing, centering, and amplifying of voices of those on the margins; and

**WHEREAS**, disparities in digital access reflect gender, race, geographic, ability, and economic privilege, systemically entrenching existing inequalities in the United States; and,

**WHEREAS**, this divide is similarly experienced globally, further exacerbating inequalities especially for previously colonized nations while also impeding progress toward global commitments to the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals; and,

**WHEREAS**, the work of justice and ministry in the church is critically tied to sustainable development, intersecting with the broad work of the global Sustainable Development Goals and with specific actions including eliminating poverty, embracing sustainability, and empowering others for progress; and,

**WHEREAS**, the United Church of Christ has consistently and repeatedly taken a stand for justice for all God's children including for racial, social, disability, economic, and digital justice;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ identifies the globally widening digital divide and lack of digital inclusion as a justice issue, and invites all settings of the United Church of Christ to do likewise while working with, among other organizations, United Church of Christ Media Justice Ministry, raising awareness among constituents, and joining faith-based and other coalitions pressing for digital justice including through increased affordability, accessibility, training, and support; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages the National Setting, Conferences, and Associations to develop digital-inclusion activities and policies with attention to advocacy, access to internet-enabled devices, skills training, digital programming support, and online content designed to enable and promote self-sufficiency, participation, and collaboration; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages the National Setting, Conferences, and Associations to support rural congregations, and other congregations challenged by the current lack of digital infrastructure, in assessing local internet availability and affordability, networking them for collaborative action; and,

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ urges all settings of the United Church of Christ to advocate for digital justice and affordable, quality digital access for all, especially those who are left out or held back by systemic inequalities within the United States and around the world.

**FUNDING:** The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

**IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

**12. RACIAL EQUITY TASK FORCE REPORT**

Bob invited everyone to turn their attentions to the screens for a video presentation by Yvette Wynn and Traci Blackmon regarding work of the Racial Equity Task Force.

(Video)

The Moderator expressed thanks for the report.

**13. JACKIE ROBINSON TRIBUTE**

The Moderator invited John Dorhauer to the stage for a special tribute.

John Dorhauer paid tribute to Jackie Robinson, an American hero and a UCC legend for his diligence in working to improve the status of African Americans.

**14. THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION**

The Moderator invited Ray Jordan to the stage for the evening theological reflection.

**15. RECESS**

**Tuesday morning, July 4, 2023  
Seventh Plenary Session**

**1. MORNING DEVOTION**

The Assistant Moderator, Rushan Sinnaduray, invited Chantelle Armstead to the stage to share the morning devotion.

**2. CALL TO ORDER AND SPONSOR RECOGNITION**

Rushan called to order the Seventh Plenary of the Thirty-Fourth General Synod and invited the body to watch the screens for a presentation General Synod sponsors, United Church Homes and The Pilgrim Press.

(Video Presentation: United Church Homes and The Pilgrim Press)

Rushan thanked the sponsors and invited Julia Gaughan to the stage for a special announcement.

**3. SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT**

Julia Gaughan, Traci Blackmon, and Karen Georgia Thompson proclaimed that all are welcome and loved and invited any person who had been harmed by remarks from other groups within the convention center to send an email to the leaders and people would be available to provide safe

travel within the convention center, and also protection and love to each one who had been harmed.

#### **4. SPEAK OUT!**

1. Sally Scheib (Illinois Conference) Be more discerning in our technology use.
2. Andrew Boyer (Penn Central Conference) Getting youth involved in the church
3. Alyson Breisch (Southern Conference) UCC contemplatives and the prayer string canvas people can add to.
4. Timoth Sylvia (Southern New England Conference) Missed opportunity by not embracing technology and offering a hybrid version of General Synod.
5. Bart Welch (Montana Northern Wyoming Conference) Benefits of ecumenical campus ministry for those who have never experienced church.
6. Terry Williams (Heartland Conference) Retire the phrase “Synod Junkie” and the harmful implications it has.

The Assistant Moderator thanked the Speak Out participants and announced the final Speak Out would be at the afternoon plenary.

#### **5. THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION**

The Assistant Moderator invited Amy Brooks back to the stage to offer the theological reflection.

#### **6. A RESOLUTION TO STUDY AND DEVELOP REPARATIONS PROPOSALS FOR AFRICAN AMERICANS**

Rushan invited Jude Johnson (S. California/Nevada Conference), Chair of Committee #11, to introduce the Resolution to Study and Develop Reparations Proposals for African Americans.

Jude Johnson introduced the resolution and moved that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopt the Resolution to Study and Develop Reparations Proposals for African Americans, as amended by the committee. Jude Johnson also spoke to the Motion.

The Assistant Moderator called for discussion.

There was no discussion.

**23-GS-43 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the Resolution to Study and Develop Reparations Proposals for African Americans, as amended by the committee.

**MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 609 Yes; 19 No; 4 Abstain)**

#### **A RESOLUTION TO STUDY AND DEVELOP REPARATIONS PROPOSALS FOR AFRICAN AMERICANS**



## **A Resolution of Witness**

### **TEXT OF THE RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, the institution of slavery is internationally recognized as a crime for which there is no statute of limitations.

**WHEREAS**, the enslavement of Africans fueled the prosperity of our young nation, allowing its economy to reap the benefits of unpaid labor of untold value.

**WHEREAS**, the ministry of the One we follow, Jesus, speaking in the tradition of the prophets of Israel that was his tradition, called his followers to a project of political transformation to a God-centered society, including forgiveness of debts and equitable distribution of resources.

**WHEREAS**, we fervently strive to enact the prayer Jesus taught his followers, “On Earth as it is in Heaven.”

**WHEREAS**, the United Church of Christ affirms in its bylaws (Justice and Witness Ministries section 268) that the Church in all its expressions is encouraged to speak prophetically on matters of justice, power, and public policy; to confront expressions of injustice and alienation in the Church and in society.

**WHEREAS**, in 1991, the United Church of Christ issued the Pastoral Letter on Racism and the Role of the Church that called the Church to advance issues of racial justice.

**WHEREAS**, at the 23rd General Synod of the United Church of Christ (2001), the Synod adopted the Resolution, “A Call for Study on Reparations for Slavery.”

**WHEREAS**, at the 24th General Synod of the United Church of Christ (2003), Executive Minister Rev. Bernice Powell Jackson presented the study and discussion guide, *Reparations: A Process for Repairing the Breach*.

**WHEREAS**, in 2008, the UCC Collegium issued The Pastoral Letter on Racism that articulated “the challenges and opportunities of a Sacred Conversation at this time in our nation’s history and the life of our church.”

**WHEREAS**, the late Rep. Conyers Jr. (D MI-13) introduced to the 115th Congress of the United States (2017-2018), the Commission to Study Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act.

**WHEREAS**, in the wake of Rep. Conyers passing, Representative Sheila Jackson Lee (D TX-18) introduced into the first session of the 117th Congress (2021-2022), the Commission to Study Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act .

**WHEREAS**, in April 2021, United Church of Christ leaders supported the Commission to Study Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act, publishing, “UCC Leaders Laud Historic Legislation on Reparations, Heading to House Vote .”

**WHEREAS**, in 2022, the United Church of Christ launched the Join the Movement campaign that stated, in part, “As followers of Jesus, we believe it is our mandate to work for and seek justice, love, and compassion, as we join with and become our own Spirit-led movements toward racial justice.”

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ publicly proclaims its support of the Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act and like-legislation that mirrors establishes a commission to study and develop reparation proposals for African Americans as defined in Section 3 of the referenced Act. Commission to Study Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act “Establishment and Duties” (a) Establishment: There is established the Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages all settings of the United Church of Christ to study the Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act and like like-legislation that establishes a commission to study and develop reparation proposals for African Americans as defined in Section 3 of the referenced Act. That mirrors Section 3 of the Commission to Study Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act “Establishment and Duties (a) Establishment: There is established the Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans”.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ requests that the United Church of Christ Board support new and ongoing commitments and actions to further the ministry work of the Reparatory Justice and Reparations Ministry of the United Church of Christ National setting.

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ requests that the United Church of Christ Board form a Reparations Legislative Task Force, with partnership input from of the United Church of Christ Washington DC Office and the Reparatory Justice and Reparations Ministry of the United Church of Christ National setting.,

The duties of this taskforce shall including include but not be limited to:

- (a) designing and developing an advocacy toolkit that will equip all settings of the UCC to ask members of Congress to take-up the Act for floor debate and ultimately to pass the Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act and like-legislation;
- (b) issuing an open call to all settings of the UCC for participation, to monitor and communicate legislative actions, and participate in and communicate advocacy legislative actions for to A enact the Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act and like-legislation. Call for the Study of Reparations for African Americans Act and to design and develop an advocacy toolkit made available for all settings of the UCC to ask members of Congress to take-up the Act for floor debate and ultimately to pass the Call for the Study of Reparations for African Americans Act.

**FUNDING:** The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

**IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

7. **AFFIRMING GUNS TO GARDENS AND OTHER GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION MINISTRIES**

Rushan called on Charnley Marsden (Pacific Northwest Conference), Chair of Committee #6 to introduce the Resolution Affirming Guns to Gardens and Other Gun Violence Prevention Ministries.

Charnley Marsden introduced the resolution and moved that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopt the Resolution Affirming Guns to Gardens and Other Gun Violence Prevention Ministries, as amended by committee.

Charnley Marsden ceded her time to speak to the motion to Jackie Hibbard (Rocky Mountain Conference).

The Assistant Moderator moved without objection to grant voice to Jackie Hibbard for the purpose of addressing the resolution.

**23-GS-44 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ granted Voice without Vote to the Jackie Hibbard by unanimous consent

Jackie Hibbard spoke to the motion and recommended its approval.

The Assistant Moderator called for discussion.

Discussion:

John King (Heartland Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Ken Forbeck (Wisconsin Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Laura Madison (Southern Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Anna Larson (Minnesota Conference) Spoke in Favor  
James Carson-Wilson (Central Atlantic Conference and MRSEJ) Spoke in Favor  
Jes Kast (Penn Central Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Jon Prain (Illinois Conference) Spoke in Favor

8. **MOTION TO END DEBATE**

Cole Brenner-Smith (Penn Southeast Conference) moved to call the question and end debate.

The Motion was seconded.

**23-GS-45 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to end debate.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**23-GS-46 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the Resolution Affirming Guns to Gardens and Other Gun Violence Prevention Ministries.

**MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 644 Yes; 9 No; 1 Abstain)**

**AFFIRMING GUNS TO GARDENS AND OTHER GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION**  
**MINISTRIES**  
**A Resolution of Witness**

**TEXT OF THE RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, there is an absence of federal action on gun control and safety; and

**WHEREAS**, we are called to co-create with the Holy Spirit the kingdom of God in this world – a kingdom of peace and justice and care; and

**WHEREAS**, there is an opportunity for individual congregations, associations and conferences to provide practical, pastoral and prophetic ministry related to preventing gun violence;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ declares the time has come for us all – individuals, congregations, associations, and conferences– to actively promote peace and engage in efforts to end gun violence;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ implores all United Church of Christ individuals, congregations, associations and conferences to pray for peace and for an end to these horrific acts of violence, and to let our prayers move us to meaningful action;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that we give thanks, pray for, and commend the congregations and organizations that have participated in gun violence prevention programs such as the Guns to Gardens project as a way to responsibly dispose of unwanted firearms;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls on individuals, congregations, associations, and conferences in the United Church of Christ to learn about the Guns to Gardens project and prayerfully consider if it is a movement, and to host safe surrender events for unwanted guns to be dismantled according to rules of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls on congregations, associations, and conferences in the United Church of Christ to

prayerfully consider hosting events to give away gun safes and/or locks to promote safe storage of firearms to prevent unauthorized use and accidental use; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ asks Justice and Local Church Ministries to compile and share materials from existing gun violence prevention ministries to assist UCC congregations with guidance in offering gun violence prevention ministries.

**FUNDING:** The funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

**IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

### **POINT OF PRIVILEGE**

Ramona Bamgbose (Illinois Conference) called for a moment of silence to pray for those affected by gun violence who are no longer with us.

### **9. ACTIVELY AFFIRMING THE HUMAN DIGNITY OF TRANSGENDER AND NONBINARY PERSONS**

The Assistant Moderator called on Kelle Brown (Pacific Northwest Conference), Chair of Committee #13, to introduce the resolution Actively Affirming the Human Dignity of Transgender and Non-Binary Persons.

Kelle Brown introduced the resolution and moved that the Thirty-fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopt the Resolution Actively Affirming the Human Dignity of Transgender and Non-Binary Persons, as amended, and spoke to the Motion and recommended its approval.

Rushan called for discussion.

Discussion:

Elliott Luedke (Wisconsin Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Mak Kneebone (Michigan Conference and O & A Coalition) Spoke in Favor  
Elle Smith (Rocky Mountain Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Judith Steger Kennedy (Illinois Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Anne Killinger (New Hampshire Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Kevin Tindell (O & A Coalition) Spoke in Favor  
Hawley Brown (Southern New England Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Daniel Tucker (Indiana-Kentucky Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Zeph Marean (New Hampshire Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Cree Malone-Miller (South Central Conference) Spoke in Favor

**10. MOTION TO END DEBATE**

Ray Riegel (Penn Southeast Conference) moved to call the question and end debate.

The Motion was seconded.

**23-GS-47 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to end debate.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**23-GS-48 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the Resolution Actively Affirming the Human Dignity of Transgender and Non-Binary Persons, as amended by committee.

**MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 633 Yes; 10 No; 6 Abstain)**

**ACTIVELY AFFIRMING THE HUMAN DIGNITY OF TRANSGENDER AND  
NONBINARY PERSONS**  
**A Resolution of Witness**

**TEXT OF THE RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, the United Church of Christ has staked its claim to be an open and affirming denomination and has worked hard to maintain a radical welcome to the LGBTQ+ community in many of our churches; and

**WHEREAS**, the human dignity and human rights of transgender and non-binary people are being threatened in at least 30 states through legislation that denies access to life-saving health care, participation in sports, and utilization of gender appropriate bathrooms; and

**WHEREAS**, gender dysphoria is a serious medical condition that, if left untreated, can result in severe anxiety and depression, self-harm, and suicidality; and

**WHEREAS**, when appropriately treated, gender dysphoria is easily managed by following appropriate treatment protocols to affirm their gender identity and alleviate distress; and

**WHEREAS**, compassionate parents and medical teams are, in some states, being legally punished for offering, providing, and extending life-saving healthcare to trans and nonbinary youth and adults; and

**WHEREAS**, decisions about gender-affirming medical care must be made between a provider, patient, and the patient's parents or guardians; and

**WHEREAS**, trans and nonbinary youth and adults face a higher rate of death by suicide than their peers and are more vulnerable to violence and death, specifically and disproportionately transgender women of color; and

**WHEREAS**, a Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network (GLSEN) survey shows that more than 80% of “gender expansive” students have been harassed and a third feel unsafe in classrooms; and

**WHEREAS**, research shows that it can be extremely harmful for a transgender person to be excluded from a sports team consistent with their gender identity; and

**WHEREAS**, in a country where transgender people have no federal protections while they face massive discrimination and attacks, civil rights must be spelled out and protected; and

**WHEREAS**, public discourse perpetuating the myth of the gender binary causes great harm when used as the rationale for discrimination and punitive legislation; and

**WHEREAS**, efforts of allies sometimes fail to provide the support intended for our transgender and non-binary siblings, including UCC Open and Affirming congregations;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ reaffirms the historic commitment of this church to recognize and affirm that every human being is created in the image of God and is due respect for their inherent human dignity and rights so that they may not only survive but thrive; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ reaffirms and proclaims people of transgender, nonbinary, and gender diverse experiences are beloved by God, with unique gifts and graces from the Divine for the life of the church and society, and are among the neighbors Jesus commands us to love and treat with worth and dignity; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages all settings of the church, working with local partners, to advocate for the full legal equality of transgender, nonbinary, and gender diverse persons; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages all settings of the church to amplify the affirming voices of our sacred texts to stand in solidarity with transgender, nonbinary, and gender diverse persons against harm done, often through the use of religious language; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages all settings of the church to organize to provide aid, comfort, and sanctuary to all who have been made refugees by hostile legislation; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls on the leadership and other appropriate ministries of the United Church of Christ to

create and share resources to help congregations, communities, policymakers and activists to develop gender-affirming practices in all aspects of the United Church of Christ and its communities of context.

**FUNDING:** The funding for the implementation of this resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

**IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities with the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

### **POINT OF PRIVILEGE**

Tyler Connoley (Central Pacific Conference and UCCB) thanked the Committee for adding sacred text to the Resolution and recognized ancestors from the biblical text.

11. **A RESOLUTION TO URGE ALL RESPONSIBLE ENTITIES TO JOIN IN REPARATIONS TO FUND CHRISTIAN HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE EDUCATION PROGRAMS TO UNDO A CENTURY OF EXTINCTION. AMERICANIZATION AND INDOCTRINATION POLICIES EXTINGUISHED THE ORIGINAL CHRISTIAN HAWAIIAN ALPHABET**

The Assistant Moderator invited Gloria Cox (Illinois Conference), Chair of Committee #7, to introduce the Resolution to Urge All Responsible Entities to Join in Reparations to Fund Christian Hawaiian Language Education Programs to Undo a Century of Extinction. Americanization and Indoctrination Policies Extinguished the Original Christian Hawaiian Alphabet.

Gloria Cox (Illinois Conference) introduced the Motion and moved that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopt the Resolution to Urge All Responsible Entities to Join in Reparations to Fund Christian Hawaiian Language Education Programs to Undo a Century of Extinction. Americanization and Indoctrination Policies Extinguished the Original Christian Hawaiian Alphabet. Gloria recommended approval of the resolution as amended by the committee. Gloria also spoke to the Motion.

The Moderator called for discussion.

Discussion:

Meredith Mase (Southern New England Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Tyler Connoley (Central Pacific Conference and UCCB) Spoke Against  
Linda Kaauiwai-Iwamoto (Hawaiian Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Wryen Kiwaha (Hawaiian Conference) Spoke Against  
William Wei (Southern New England Conference) Spoke in Favor  
C. Renee Thompson (South Central Conference) Spoke Against  
Larry Littlegeorge (CAIM) Spoke in Favor  
Robb Kojima (Hawaiian Conference) Spoke Against



Gregory Baker (Southern New England Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Wendell Davis (Hawaiian Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Gloria Ann Muraki (Hawaiian Conference and UCCB) Spoke in Favor  
Rob Schwartz (Southern New England Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Allen Reynolds (Illinois Conference) Spoke in Favor

**12. MOTION TO END DEBATE**

Wayne Shannon (Wisconsin Conference) moved to call the question and end debate.

The Motion was seconded.

**23-GS-49 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to end debate.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**23-GS-50 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the Resolution to Urge All Responsible Entities to Join in Reparations to Fund Christian Hawaiian Language Education Programs to Undo a Century of Extinction. Americanization and Indoctrination Policies Extinguished the Original Christian Hawaiian Alphabet.

**MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 377 Yes; 181 No; 85 Abstain)**

**A RESOLUTION TO URGE ALL RESPONSIBLE ENTITIES TO JOIN IN  
REPARATIONS TO FUND CHRISTIAN HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE EDUCATION  
PROGRAMS TO UNDO A CENTURY OF EXTINCTION. AMERICANIZATION AND  
INDOCTRINATION POLICIES EXTINGUISHED THE ORIGINAL CHRISTIAN  
HAWAIIAN ALPHABET**  
**A Resolution of Witness**

**TEXT OF THE RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, the US congress passed the 1819 Civilization Act which funded missionary organizations to civilize natives in Hawaii, America, Alaska and

**WHEREAS**, in 1820 the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions arrived in the Sandwich Islands, and

**WHEREAS**, in 1823 Luakini Maunakea ma Kalapana was the first church built on the East side of Hawaii island, and

**WHEREAS**, December 19, 1831, Princess Pauahi was born an heir of the Kamehameha family, and

**WHEREAS**, the process to translate and print the first Hawaiian Bible titled “Palapala Hemolele” began in 1822 - 1839 and was published in two parts 1832 Buke I (Old Testament and 1839 Buke II (New Testament) and

**WHEREAS**, the all white officers of the Hawaiian Evangelical Association board was created in 1854, and

**WHEREAS**, in 1863 Rufus Anderson Secretary of the ABCFM recommended to the all white board members to transfer control of the church in the Hawaiian Kingdom to Hawaiians which the churches officers did not do continuing their control today, and

**WHEREAS**, on October 16, 1884 Princess Pauahi passed leaving a legacy through her will to educate Hawaiian children in the Christian Hawaiian language, and

**WHEREAS**, on November 4, 1887 the founding ceremony blessed the opening of the Kamehameha schools for boys, and

**WHEREAS**, Reverend William Oleson the first principal for the Kamehameha Schools banned the Christian Hawaiian language from being spoken on the Kamehameha Schools campus, and

**WHEREAS**, in 1887 White church officers of the Hawaiian Evangelical Association and Reverend William Oleson forced King Kalakaua to sign a new constitution, and

**WHEREAS**, in 1893 White church officers of the Hawaiian Evangelical Association collaborated with U.S. minister Stevens to overthrow the Hawaiian Kingdom, and

**WHEREAS**, in 1895 the Republic of Hawaii implemented Act 57 which banned Christian Hawaiian language from being spoken in public schools, and

**WHEREAS**, in 1906 the Department of Public Instruction implemented policies of Americanization in Public schools to Americanize all the children, and

**WHEREAS**, in 1916 the Congress passed the National Defense Act that funded the identity altering JROTC program at Kamehameha schools, and

**WHEREAS** all of these actions and more combined to extinguish the Christian Hawaiian language of twenty-one letters from 1822, and

**WHEREAS**, in the 1980’s revitalization of Hawaiian language only thirteen letters were recognized as being Hawaiian letters;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ recognizes the first Christian Hawaiian language (alphabet of twenty-one letters), which was created by Hawaiian Chiefs and The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) missionaries, that was printed in 1822, as relevant and valuable and calls on all other settings of the United Church of Christ to do the same; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages all settings of the United Church of Christ to increase awareness of the Americanization and indoctrination policies, enforced by the colonizers of the Hawaiian Kingdom, that led to extinguishing the Christian Hawaiian language as part of a larger project of cultural genocide; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages all settings of the United Church of Christ to support the Association of Hawaiian Evangelical Churches of the UCC's initiative to solicit funding from all settings of the Church to revitalize the Christian Hawaiian language through luakini education programs from preschool through adulthood.

**FUNDING:** The funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

**IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

**13. A RESOLUTION DENOUNCING THE DOBBS DECISION AND PROCLAIMING ABORTION AS HEALTHCARE**

The Assistant Moderator called on Dakota Roberts (Indiana-Kentucky Conference), chair of Committee #1, to introduce the Resolution Denouncing the Dobbs Decision and Proclaiming Abortion as Healthcare.

Dakota Roberts introduced Resolution and moved that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopt the Resolution Denouncing the Dobbs Decision and Proclaiming Abortion as Healthcare, as amended by the committee. Dakota Roberts also spoke to the Motion.

The Assistant Moderator called for discussion.

Discussion:

Chris Davies (Southern New England Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Maeba Jonas (Central Atlantic Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Aaron Rieder (Michigan Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Zoe Pfeifer (Pacific Northwest Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Jane Newall (Southern New England Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Dawn Kay (Wisconsin Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Peter Strobel (Missouri Mid-South Conference) Spoke in Favor

**14. MOTION TO END DEBATE**

Josian Accola (Illinois South Conference) moved to call the question and end debate.

The Motion was seconded.

**23-GS-51 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to end debate.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**POINT OF PRIVILEGE**

Elizabeth O'Sullivan (Minnesota Conference) asked for a moment of silence, prayer for lives lost and pain people are carrying around these topics. (Time of silence after the vote)

**23-GS-52 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the Resolution Denouncing the Dobbs Decision and Proclaiming Abortion as Healthcare.

**MOTION CARRIED (Vote 611 Yes; 24 No; 13 Abstain)**

**DENOUNCING THE DOBBS DECISION AND PROCLAIMING ABORTION AS  
HEALTH CARE**

**A Resolution of Witness**

**TEXT OF THE RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, the Dobbs decision overturned Roe v. Wade and ruled that there is no constitutional right to abortion;

**WHEREAS**, a majority of Americans support legal abortion in all or most cases;

**WHEREAS**, anti-abortion laws do not decrease abortion rates but make abortions more dangerous by eliminating access to safe, affordable, and medically-necessary abortions;

**WHEREAS**, abortion care following miscarriage is severely restricted by abortion bans, threatening the lives of pregnant people in their time of grief;

**WHEREAS**, people of lower socioeconomic status and people of color are more likely to receive abortion care, due to systemic factors including poverty, lack of access to contraception, and distrust of the medical system, and whereas anti-abortion laws deepen unequal access to comprehensive reproductive care, with insufficient access mostly affecting rural communities and Black and Brown communities and negative reproductive health outcomes disproportionately affecting people of color;

**WHEREAS**, General Synod 8 “[called] for the repeal of all legal prohibitions of physician-performed abortions”; General Synod 12 “[reaffirmed] full freedom of choice for the persons involved in making decisions regarding pregnancy”; General Synod 17 “[deplored] the decision

handed down today by the United States Supreme Court severely limiting major provisions of Roe v. Wade as undermining the spirit of the constitutional freedom of choice of women of this nation and making freedom of choice essentially a luxury for those who are not economically disadvantaged;”

**WHEREAS**, previous General Synods (12, 13, 16, 18) have paired support for safe and legal abortions with a desire for information and resources about contraception and family planning, and teen abortion rates decline with free access to contraception; and the United Church of Christ has heeded this call through holistic, faithful sexuality education, Our Whole Lives, which helps participants make informed and responsible decisions about their sexual health and behavior;

**WHEREAS**, Justice Thomas’ concurring opinion in Dobbs threatens Constitutional protection for access to contraception, as well as protection for same-sex sexual relations and marriage;

**WHEREAS**, the UCC Medical Benefits Plan covers abortion “per Plan policies and per individual state regulations,” and is now an unequal benefit across states where the UCC Medical Plan has beneficiaries;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ affirms the right of all people to access reproductive healthcare including contraception and abortion and takes the following actions:

Proclaims that forced birth is an act of sexual violence and the choice to have and care for children is a sacred decision which should not be forced upon anyone;

Proclaims that every person seeking an abortion is a beloved child of God, our neighbor, a person we love;

Denounces the overturn of legal precedent in Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization and condemns all laws banning abortion or restricting access to reproductive health services;

Affirms the morality of resisting by peaceful means, including civil disobedience, any laws banning abortions, and calls upon every setting of the United Church of Christ to use Just Peace practices to confront abortion bans and restrictions on reproductive healthcare;

Calls upon the National Setting of the United Church of Christ and the Conferences to explore and pursue all avenues for legal challenges to abortion bans;

Directs the United Church of Christ Board to explore creation of a Bail Fund, as necessary, for UCC members arrested for participation in civil disobedience or other acts of non-violent Christian witness that promote social, racial, economic, environmental, gender, and reproductive justice; the UCC Board shall report on their progress of this exploration by General Synod 35;

Calls upon the Pension Boards to ensure that benefits parity exists for all beneficiaries covered under UCC Medical. Benefits parity shall include covering travel costs for any covered persons needing to travel out of state to access abortion and contraception unlawful in their own State.

Benefits parity in this regard shall be completed no later than the end of 2025. The Pension Boards shall report on their progress in implementing benefits parity by General Synod 35.

In the period between General Synod 34 and the end of 2025, the 34th General Synod calls upon the UCBMA (United Church Board Ministerial Assistance) to provide emergency grants to any UCC Medical beneficiaries and other eligible applicants to cover out of pocket costs and travel costs incurred by accessing care not available in their home state. Eligible costs shall include any such costs impacting households of any authorized minister, member in discernment, and eligible lay employee. The UCBMA shall continue to ensure that the application process for such emergency grants will not require the disclosure of medically sensitive information. The UCBMA—in collaboration with the Pension Boards, Conference Ministers, and the National Setting—shall widely communicate the availability of these emergency grants throughout the United Church of Christ

Calls upon Local Churches and their members to engage with the Our Whole Lives: Sexuality and Our Faith curriculum to promote holistic sexuality education, including information and education about contraception, and to support and offer access to contraceptives;

Calls upon Local Churches, Associations, and Conferences to physically, financially, and spiritually accompany people seeking and receiving abortions and other reproductive healthcare, in partnership with local health care agencies and abortion funds.

**FUNDING:** The funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

**IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

### **POINT OF PRIVILEGE**

John Gage (Southern New England Conference) asked the body to be mindful of calling to end debate in order to give consideration and grace to those who feel the need to speak.

### **POINT OF PRIVILEGE**

Julia Gaughan (UCCB) Expressed gratitude for the O and A Coalition for their time and presence.

### **POINT OF PRIVILEGE**

Art Cribbs (Honored Guest) and Davida Crabtree asked for a time of silence and prayer to honor Douglas Andrews, one of the founders of United Black Christians, who recently passed away.

## **15. AFFIRMATIVE ACTION**

The Assistant Moderator recognized Cean James (Penn Southeast Conference).

Cean James moved the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ to endorse the letter from the Officers of the United Church of Christ reaffirming our support for affirmative action policies as an antidote to systematic racist enrollment policies.

The Motion was seconded.

The Assistant Moderator called for discussion.

Discussion:

Freeman Palmer (Central Atlantic Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Josiah Accola (Illinois Conference) Spoke Against  
Shannon Garrett (Penn West Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Luke Bronnert (Heartland Conference) Spoke Against  
Jason Carson Wilson (Central Atlantic Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Ruth Shaver (Southern New England Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Zillah Jackson Wesley (United Black Christians) Spoke in Favor  
Adam Isbitsky (Southern New England Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Mimi Goodwin (Minnesota Conference and CAIM) Spoke in Favor  
David Ackerman (Penn West Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Jamar Doyle (UCCB and CHHSM) Spoke in Favor

**16. MOTION TO END DEBATE**

Peg Schwart-Green (Penn Southeast Conference) moved to call the question and end debate.

The Motion was seconded.

**23-GS-53 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to end debate.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**23-GS-54 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to endorse the letter from the Officers of the United Church of Christ reaffirming our support for affirmative action policies as an antidote to systematic racist enrollment policies.

**MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 588 Yes; 22 No; 9 Abstain)**

**TEXT OF LETTER:**

In a ruling made Thursday, June 29, the U.S. Supreme Court declared affirmative action admissions programs at public and private colleges and universities unconstitutional. This key achievement of the Civil Rights Movement has been dismantled by justices who benefited from 400 years of an educational system that was constructed to promote racial inequity in this country. Affirmative Action programs have never been about granting unearned access to non-

white students, but rather such efforts remain necessary to disrupt the barriers to equal and equitable education for all people that are fortified by racism and economic inequity in our society. Although Affirmative Action was struck down, legacy admissions, donor designated admissions, and athletic admissions to the most esteemed institutions in our nation remain available to those who are well resourced in society. The officers of the United Church of Christ re-affirm this denomination's firm support of Affirmative Action policies as an antidote to the systemic and systematic racism that remains a barrier to qualified non-white students all over the nation. We are grateful for the dissenting opinion of Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson, and caution all that what the Supreme Court has done today is not only egregious, but another poignant reminder that "justice" in our court systems is not, and never has been blind.

**17. MUSIC/STRETCH BREAK**

**18. RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL STAFF**

The Assistant Moderator invited the National Staff to make their way to the stage and invited the General Synod to join in a formal expression of appreciation to all of them for the work that they do in the National Setting for Local Churches, Associations, Conferences, and the General Synod in so many ways.

**POINT OF PRIVILEGE**

Suzanne Schwartz Green (Penn Southeast Conference) To all white folks, check your racism, check your privilege. We can and we must do better.

**19. ENCOURAGING A PLANT-BASED LIFE**

The Moderator, Bob Sandman, called on Hank Forman, chair of Committee #8 to introduce the Resolution Encouraging a Plant-Based Life.

Hank Fairman (Illinois Conference) introduced the resolution and moved that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopt the resolution as amended by committee. Hank Fairman also spoke to the Motion.

The Assistant Moderator, Rushan Sinnaduray, called for discussion.

Discussion:

Jess Peacock (Heartland Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Jabe Ziino (New York Conference) Spoke Against  
Ken Forbeck (Wisconsin Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Cole Benner-Smith (Penn Southeast Conference) Spoke Against

**20. MOTION TO AMEND**



Lily Tinker Fortel (Michigan Conference) moved to amend THEREFORE 6a by striking “reduce” and inserting “end” and by inserting “repair” that the amended THEREFORE reads: calls upon members of local churches, especially those with agricultural, environmental, and biologically scientific backgrounds to (a) advocate for responsible agriculture and environmental practices in an effort to end factory farming and repair its impacts, especially on marginalized communities and, (b) to participate in local government with the intention to promote sustainable farming, humane animal treatment and fair labor practices.

Hank Forman, Chair of Committee 8, stated that the committee is in favor of the proposed friendly amendment.

Rushan relayed information from the parliamentarian that if the committee is happy with it, the amendment can be incorporated into the resolution with unanimous consent by the body.

**23-GS-55 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ incorporates the friendly amendment by unanimous consent.

Additional discussion:

Arlene Turner (South Central Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Holly Morrison (Maine Conference) Spoke Against  
Liz Brunton (Penn Southeast Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Emily Munger (South Dakota Conference) Spoke Against

## **21. MOTION TO AMEND**

Jill Barr (Michigan Conference) moved to amend THEREFORE number 5 by striking “suggest to,” striking “that,” and striking a “good faith effort will be made to offer a variety of good nourishment options that include plant-based alternatives.” Instead add “encourages,” “to ensure” and “at least one balanced plant-based option.” THEREFORE Number Five would read: “encourages local churches, associations, conferences, and the national setting of the United Church of Christ in any gatherings of boards, bodies, and committees, where meals and snacks are provided to ensure at least one balanced plant-based option.”

Motion to Amend was seconded.

The Moderator called for discussion on the amendment.

Discussion:

Matthew Hogue-Smith (Southern New England Conference) Spoke Against  
Karen Routt (N. California/Nevada Conference) Spoke Against  
Jonah Garcia (Florida Conference) Spoke Against  
Fred Breuning (Vermont Conference) Spoke Against  
Vickey Allen (Southern New England Conference) Spoke For

**23-GS-56 VOTED** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the proposed amendment.

**MOTION FAILED**

The Moderator called for a return to the discussion on the original Motion.

Discussion:

Hope Schwartz (New York Conference) Spoke For  
Jonah Garcia (Florida Conference) Spoke Against  
Vickey Allen (Southern New England Conference) Spoke For  
Teresa Martin (Penn Northeast Conference) Spoke Against

**23-GS-57 VOTED** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the resolution as amended.

**MOTION FAILED (Vote: 218 Yes; 392 No; 20 Abstain)**

**ENCOURAGING A PLANT-BASED LIFE**  
**A Resolution of Witness**

**TEXT OF THE RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, Jesus devoted his life to manifesting a world honoring all creation, tending to the well-being of all creatures, and attuned to the life coursing through the earth itself; and

**WHEREAS**, our most often and fondly quoted scriptures call us to be caring stewards of creation, but creation is dying on our watch; and

**WHEREAS**, consumption of animals has been linked to almost every serious threat facing creation, including climate crisis, poor physical and mental health in people, environmental degradation, loss of biodiversity, food injustice, economic and labor injustice, the water crisis, colonialism and resulting wars; and causes trauma and immense physical and psychological pain for sentient beings bred in abominable conditions for exploitative purposes; and People of Color and people living in poverty bear the brunt of animal agriculture's harmful effects on humans; and

**WHEREAS**, there is no function of animal agriculture that cannot be served by plant- or synthetic-based replacements, including fortified plant-based milks and cereals; and

**WHEREAS**, animal-based products would not be affordable or widely available if not for government subsidies; and

**WHEREAS**, UCC General Minister and President John Dorhauer called the UCC in 2017 to the mission emphasis of “The Three Great Loves” and invited every setting of the UCC to make a

commitment to “discover ways in which you can engage the members of your faith community in mission that ... honors the call to be good stewards of God's creation;” and

**WHEREAS**, General Synods have passed dozens of resolutions decrying environmental degradation, racism, worker exploitation, world hunger and our responsibility to feed the planet, and has adopted measures related to global migration, noting that food and water are often at its root, each time urging UCC members to adopt new behaviors to lessen the impact or reverse the causes of economic, environmental, climate and immigration injustice; to become an anti-racist church, a labor- and immigrant-supporting church, an economic and environmental justice church,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Thirty Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ

1. encourages individuals, local churches, associations, conferences, and the national setting to work towards incorporating more plant-based items into their daily lives;
2. requests the United Church Board and its appropriate ministries to create and provide multigenerational resources and opportunities for culturally and globally responsive education, so that informed decisions can be made regarding a move toward more earth-friendly practices, including (but not limited to) the health of all creation, sustainability, elimination of food apartheid\*, the ethical treatment of animals, and fair and safe practices for agricultural industry laborers;
3. encourages individuals, local churches, associations, conferences, and the national setting of the United Church of Christ to consider taking steps toward the increased use of sustainable plant-based items;
4. requests the United Church Board to recognize November 1 as World Vegan Day and to add it to the yearly calendar of observances of the church;
6. suggests to local churches, associations, conferences, and the national setting of the United Church of Christ, that in any gathering of their boards, bodies, and committees, where meals and snacks are provided, a good-faith effort will be made to offer a variety of nourishment options that includes plant-based alternatives; and calls upon members of local churches, especially those with agricultural, environmental, and biologically scientific backgrounds: a) to advocate for responsible agricultural and environmental practices in an effort to reduce factory farming and its impacts, especially on marginalized communities, and b) to participate in local government with intention to promote sustainable farming, humane animal treatment, and fair labor practices.

\* Food apartheid: a system of segregation that divides those with access to an abundance of nutritious food and those who have been denied that access due to systemic injustice (regeneration.org)

**FUNDING:** The funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

**IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

## **POINT OF PRIVILEGE**

Craig Bielke (Illinois South Conference) mentioned that the Moderator's time keeping is not always working.

### **22. RESOLUTION CONDEMNING PROLOGNED SOLITARY CONFINEMENT AS A FORM OF TORTURE**

The Assistant Moderator called on Melody Seaton (Illinois Conference) Chairperson of Committee 12 to introduce the Resolution Condemning Prolonged Solitary Confinement as a Form of Torture.

Melody Seaton introduced the resolution and moved the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopt the Resolution Condemning Prolonged Solitary Confinement as amended in Committee. Allison Patton (Southern New England Conference) spoke to the Resolution.

Rushan called for discussion.

Discussion:

Laura Madison (Southern Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Grant Carodine (Southeast Conference) Spoke Against  
Davin Franklin Hicks (Southwest Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Nandini Sadagopan (Wisconsin Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Patti Hoyt (Penn Northeast Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Jerry Locula (Minnesota Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Shawn Fisher (Southern New England Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Bobby Burt (Heartland Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Katy Fazio (Southern New England Conference) Spoke in Favor  
CJ Shoe (Southern Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Alicia Reese (Illinois Conference) Spoke in Favor

### **23. MOTION TO END DEBATE**

Bobby Burt (Heartland Conference) moved to call the question and end debate.

The Motion was seconded.

**23-GS-58 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to end debate.

**MOTION CARRIED**

### **24. MOTION TO AMEND**

Grant Carodine (Southeast Conference) asked to bring an amendment to the Resolution.

The Assistant Moderator indicated that the request for an amendment came after the Motion to End Debate and therefore ruled out of order.

**25. MOTION TO APPEAL**

Grant Carodine (Southeast Conference) made a motion to appeal decision of the Assistant Moderator on ending debate.

The Motion was seconded.

**23-GS-59 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted on the Motion to Appeal the Decision of the Assistant Moderator to end Debate.

**MOTION FAILED**

**23-GS-60 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the Resolution Condemning Prolonged Solitary Confinement as a Form of Torture as amended in Committee.

**MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 603 Yes; 18 No; 6 Abstain)**

**RESOLUTION CONDEMNING PROLOGNED SOLITARY CONFINEMENT AS A  
FORM OF TORTURE**  
**A Resolution of Witness**

**TEXT OF THE RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, the Twelfth General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopted a “Pronouncement on Human Rights” that denounced torture of any kind and affirmed that the “relationship of God to creation gives all human beings their in-alienable human right.” And further stated that “rights must be not only declared and codified, but also must be cared for, nurtured and embodied in covenant relationships between persons, groups, nations and between human beings and nature”, and

**WHEREAS**, solitary confinement is defined by the United Nations in its Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, as revised in 2015, also known as “The Nelson Mandela Rules,” as the confinement of prisoners for 22 hours or more a day without meaningful human contact, in excess of 15 days), and

**WHEREAS**, long-term isolation has been shown to offer no rehabilitative benefit, but its destructive psychological effects are well-documented, amounting to torture under international law, and

**WHEREAS**, solitary confinement as a form of torture violates the U.N. Convention Against Torture, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and the U.N. International Convention on Civil and Political Rights, and

**WHEREAS**, the Thirtieth General Synod of the United Church of Christ called for the dismantling of discriminatory systems of mass incarceration in the United States, a system that has resulted in the proliferation of prolonged solitary confinement nationwide, making the U.S. a global outlier in its use of incarceration and the systematic torture of prolonged solitary confinement, and

**WHEREAS**, the carceral system in the U.S. is built on racism and cannot be reformed, we seek ways to reduce harm to those currently incarcerated as we work toward alternatives to incarceration.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ recognizes prolonged solitary confinement, as defined by “The Nelson Mandela Rules,” as a form of torture.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ recognizes the potential for abuse in all forms of solitary confinement for any duration of time and condemns its use.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ condemns the use of prolonged solitary confinement by the United States and any government in the world, including national, state, local, and military jurisdictions, immigration detention centers, and private prisons and calls on our government to explore and implement alternatives to isolated confinement.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls on all members of the United Church of Christ to demand that their government ends any use of prolonged solitary confinement in prisons, jails, and detention centers, whether publicly run or contracted with private companies.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that as Christians we are called to amplify the voices of the oppressed, including the voices and leadership of the formerly incarcerated who return to society with an intimate knowledge of prison policies and offer first-hand knowledge of the harm caused by prolonged solitary confinement.

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls all settings to work with other faiths and human rights groups, including the National Religious Campaign Against Torture, among others, to condemn the torture of prolonged solitary confinement, work toward its abolition in the United States and around the world, and support humane and restorative alternatives.

**FUNDING:** The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

**IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

## **26. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Assistant Moderator called on Karen Georgia Thompson to bring an announcement.

Karen Georgia Thompson announced that the United Church of Christ had received an apology to this body from one of the organizations sharing this space in regard to an incident that had been mentioned earlier.

## **27. RECESS**

**Tuesday afternoon, July 4, 2023**

**Eighth Plenary Session**

### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Moderator called the Final Plenary of the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ to Order.

### **2. SPEAK OUT!**

The Moderator indicated it was time for the final Speak Out.

1. Shari Prestemon (Minnesota Conference) Spoke for prayer for Palestinians and Israelis as a result of the recent attacks.
2. Cindi Knox (N. California-Nevada Conference) Spoke requesting that you do something extraordinary on leap day February 29, 2024.
3. Mimi Goodwin (CAIM) Spoke to honor Marlene Helgemo, who served the Native Americans One year anniversary of her death. Also thankful for the resolution around Boarding School Healing.
4. Jeanette Zaragoza De Leon (UCCB) Spoke about the Fifth Historical Stream, radical inclusivity, and intentionally searching for other streams.
5. Marcelino Rivera (Florida Conference) Spoke to lift up several ministers in Mexico.
6. Jill Olds (Southern New England Conference) Spoke about the Yale Youth Ministries Institute to promote the faith and flourishing youth ministry.
7. Hugo Morrison (Southern Conference) Spoke about being dismayed at the lack of respect and the need to investigate some racial injustices that occurred at this Synod.
8. Lauren Lambert-Goheen (Illinois South Conference) Spoke to encourage people to be religious volunteers for those incarcerated.
9. Jill Olinger (Indiana-Kentucky Conference) Spoke in gratitude to local arrangements committee to this synod and requested feedback.
10. Alicia Reese (Illinois Conference) Spoke about being distressed with people “Calling the Question” resolution about abortion and the need for people to be heard.

11. Carr Notorangelo (Illinois Conference) Spoke in support of the transgender youth and grateful for safety in UCC.
12. Liam Newberry (Southern New England Conference) Spoke to ask for prayers for those affected by violence in Europe.
13. Noah Brewer-Wallin and Michael Streib (Southern New England Conference) Spoke to invite churches who struggle with how to be affirming to trans and non-binary individuals to conference in the fall.
14. Matthew Plourd (Southern New England Conference) Spoke as a community organizer with youth with an invitation for the youth to use their right to speak for themselves.
15. Kayla Bonewell (Kansas-Oklahoma Conference) Spoke out about ideas on how to take resolutions back to local churches.
16. Todd Siefker (Iowa Conference) Spoke to give thanks for the happiness found in the UCC.
17. Joseph Shore-Goss (Florida Conference) Spoke to invite the Synod to stop by to see the AIDS Quilt.
18. Ann Kansfield (New York Conference) Spoke about changing her plan to talk about her book but instead shared the invitation of the previous delegate to view the AIDS quilt and give thanks to those who paved the way.
19. Muriel Otto (Wisconsin Conference) Spoke encouraging churches to consider the benefits of parttime ministry
20. Shannon Garrett-Doege (Penn West Conference) Spoke out to promote youth ministry
21. Jon Prain (Illinois Conference) Spoke out to invite attendees to promote the resolutions passed at this Synod.
22. Muriel Jahn (Illinois Conference) Designing T-shirts Youth Group Store St. John's T Shirts to support the youth group.

### **3. JUSTICE AND LOCAL CHURCH VIDEO**

The Moderator called attention to the Justice and Local Church Video and thanked them for their sponsorship.

(Video)

### **4. FREE FROM PLASTIC POLLUTION**

The Moderator called on Rob Edwards (Southern Conference), Chair of Committee #9, to introduce the Resolutions, both titled "Free from Plastic Pollution," one from the Florida Conference and the other from the New Hampshire Conference.

Rob Edwards introduced the combined Resolution Free from Plastic Pollution and recommended that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopt the Resolution, as combined and amended by committee. Rob Edwards also spoke to the motion.

The Moderator called for Discussion:

Zeph Marean (New Hampshire Conference) Spoke in Favor  
 Gary Kwong (Minnesota Conference) Spoke Against



Pauline Geary (Florida Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Matthew Plourd (Southern New England Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Hawley Brown (Southern New England Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Jess Peacock (Heartland Conference) Spoke in Favor but had a question: Why is it o.k. to tell people what to drink out of, but not o.k. to tell them what to eat as in the Plant-Based Resolution?

Rob Edwards indicated the purpose of the resolution is to urge members to begin to think forward toward a sustainable future, not mandating what to do.

Jerry Locula (Minnesota Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Maureen Duffy Guy (Penn Southeast Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Ken Forbeck (Wisconsin Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Alison Patton (Southern New England Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Jeanette Zaragoza De Leon (UCCB) Spoke in Favor  
Gail Landers (Penn Central Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Terry Parrish (Southern Conference) Spoke in Favor  
Cole Benner-Smith (Penn Southeast Conference) Spoke in Favor

**23-GS-61 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted to adopt the Resolution Free from Plastic Pollution, as amended in Committee.

**MOTION CARRIED (Vote: 592 Yes: 3 No: 5 Abstain)**

**FREE FROM PLASTIC POLLUTION**  
**A Resolution of Witness**

**TEXT OF THE RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, the scriptures (Genesis 1:1-2:6, Psalm 24:1, Isaiah 24:3-6, Jeremiah 4:23-26) hold us responsible for the way we co-live and use God’s creation, the Earth, and

**WHEREAS**, plastics resist degrading for hundreds of years, and they break down into microplastic beads; and animals, birds, fish, and humans consume microplastics to the detriment of their health, and

**WHEREAS**, United Church of Christ General Synods have passed environmental resolutions The Earth is the Lord’s (2017), The Use of Plastic Foam (2019), and The Rights of Nature (2021), and

**WHEREAS**, plastic pollution is an environmental justice concern of the UCC, and

**WHEREAS**, plastic pollution disproportionately impacts vulnerable communities, including low income people and people of color, and must be addressed from production to waste, and

**WHEREAS**, plastics are made from harmful petrochemicals that impact the health and well-being of biological life and planetary ecosystems, and the production of toxic petrochemicals disproportionately harms those living in close proximity, and

**WHEREAS**, the United Nations has called upon global faith communities to work against plastic pollution, and

**WHEREAS**, current attempts, locally, nationally, and internationally to manage plastic pollution are woefully inadequate, and

**WHEREAS**, local cleanups of plastic litter have limited impact and recycling is not effective for most plastic items.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ is called to speak truth to power against plastic “de-creation” (an academic and theological term that may refer to desacralizing, destroying or undoing that which is whole or has been whole in nature, the Earth, plants, animals, forests, and pollution, even when it is inconvenient or difficult), and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod encourages all our settings to commit to changing from a disposable culture to a reusable, sustainable one, and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod encourages education within our congregations and in our communities to advocate for alternatives to single use plastics, whether through mitigation efforts and campaigns or by supporting local and state bans on single use plastics, and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod encourages all settings of the Church to determine the best pathway forward for strategies and actions to mitigate plastic pollution, using as examples the following resources:

- The Story of Plastics, (95-minute documentary)
- Sierra Club Solutions to Plastic Pandemic
  - Ten Towns –Ten actions Toolkit of New Hampshire.
  - National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF): Join the Fight for Reducing Plastic Pollution
- Break Free Plastics: resources, articles, list of the worst corporate polluters and suggestions for actions. and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod encourages Conferences, Associations, Congregations, Synods and all settings of the United Church of Christ to reduce the use of single-use plastics and packaging, and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod commends all settings of the church to join in possible opportunities for participation in addressing plastic pollution including the following:

- Encouraging all settings of the Church to commit to change from the throwaway and disposable culture and consumptive practices to reusable and compostable products.
- Encouraging replacement of single use plastics with bioplastics, reusable, or compostable substitutes.
- Preaching on ecological sustainability principles articulated by Sallie McFague on responsible use of ecological resources and the sustainable goal of mitigating single-use plastics.
- Educating on the importance of mitigation of single-use plastics and plastic straws as well as plastic bottles at our churches, their events, and gatherings.
- Educating on the toxicity of plastic pollutions and microplastics to the health of our environment, to our own health, and the health of non-human life.
- Educating on policies and practices of local recycling and composting services and advocating for better practices.
- Organizing low or zero waste events in collaboration with local organizations and infrastructures.
- Supporting businesses that use sustainable practices such as reusable containers and reusable bags.
- Participating in public cleanup of God’s creation, including all bodies of water, parks, and beaches.
  - Installing fountains for water bottles in church campuses, wherever possible.
- Actively supporting and lobbying for local, state, national, and international legislation and policies that align with the intention of this resolution including bans of or fees on single use plastics, and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod acknowledges that accommodations in expectations need to be made for certain impacted groups such as those who are disabled or unhoused, and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod encourages all settings to speak truth to the public square against plastic pollution of the planet.

**FUNDING:** The funding for the implementation of the Resolution be made in accordance with overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

**IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

## **5. COMMITTEE PROCESS TEAM**

The Moderator thanked the Committee Process Team for all the work and help in getting through 14 Resolutions early.

## **POINT OF PRIVILEGE**

Caroline Saxton (Penn Central Conference) and others serenaded Bob Sandman.

## **6. ADDITION TO MOVEMENT MAKERS AWARD**

Rev. Traci Blackmon announced Rev. Lori Hafner is a plaintiff in an abortion rights lawsuit and is also being honored with a Movement Makers award.

**7. THANKS/RECOGNITION OF LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE**

The Moderator thanked the Local Arrangements Committee for their faithful and magnificent work and their gracious hospitality.

**8. INVITATION TO THE THIRTY-FIFTH GENERAL SYNOD**

The Moderator invited the Local Arrangements Committee of the Thirty-Fifth General Synod of the United Church of Christ from Kansas-Oklahoma and Missouri-Mid-South Conferences to present the formal invitation.

Mary Nelson (Missouri Mid-South Conference) and Lorraine Cenicerros (Kansas-Oklahoma Conference) extended the invitation.

(Video)

**9. INSTALLATION OF GENERAL SYNOD XXXV MODERATOR AND ASSISTANT MODERATOR**

The Moderator called on Cameron Barr, Chair of the UCCB to introduce the incoming Moderator, Rushan Sinnaduray and Assistant Moderator, Jean Avison.

Rushan Sinnaduray and Jean Avison took the oath of office and were installed.

The Moderator presented the Moderator banner to Rushan to be displayed in the church at the Central Union Church in Honolulu, Hawaii, the home church of Rushan Sinnaduray.

**10. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND THANKS TO GENERAL SYNOD STAFF AND PROGRAM AND PLANNING COMMITTEE**

The Moderator thanked the General Synod Program and Planning Committee of the United Church of Christ Board and the General Synod Staff

- Joyce Bathke (Missouri Mid-South Conference)
- Rachel Chapman (S. California/Nevada Conference)
- Derrick Elliott (Southwest Conference)
- John Folk (Penn Southeast Conference)
- Gloria-Ann Murak (Hawaii Conference)
- Bethany Ruhl (Missouri Mid-South Conference)
- Rushan Sinnaduray (Missouri Mid-South)
- Valerie Smith (Assistant General Synod Administrator)
- Kylie Steever (South Dakota Conference)

- Daniel Su'a (Rocky Mountain Conference)
- Karen Georgia Thompson General Synod Administrator
- Marsha Williams (New York Conference)
- Jeanette Zaragoza De Leon (New York Conference)

The Moderator called on Karen Georgia Thompson to offer thanks to our General Synod staff.

Karen Georgia Thompson thanked the staff.

**11. FINAL THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION**

The Moderator invited Amy Brooks to the stage for the final theological reflection.

**12. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Resolution Implementation  
 Invite to Explore Parade  
 Clear Tables and Pass Signs to the End

**13. RECESS AND MOTION TO ADJOURN**

The Moderator thanked everyone for their participation and called on the incoming Chair of the United Church of Christ Board, Julia Gaughan, to present one final motion.

Julia Gaughan moved to adjourn the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ at the conclusion of the evening's worship service.

**23-GS-62 VOTED:** The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted by unanimous consent to adjourn the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ at the conclusion of the evening's worship service.

The Moderator declared the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ to be

adjourned at the conclusion of the evening's worship service.

Respectfully Submitted,  
*Dianne Roberts*  
 Dianne Roberts  
 Recorder

Voting Delegates for the Thirty-Fourth General Synod

**California-N. Nevada**

Yolanda Austin  
Beverly Brook  
Gauthier, Catherine  
Hobson, Jeannie  
Hooper, Starneisia  
Lago'o, Rev Elder  
Price, Kailey  
Routt, Karen  
Turner, Hannah  
Vasquez, Marc  
White, Marvin K.  
Williams, Kimberly

**California-S. Nevada**

Adamiak, Amiah  
Berry, Billie Grace  
Chapman, Kevin  
Eng, Faren  
Farrell, Cheryl  
Fisher, Mattea  
Halter-Balin, Tracy  
Hiestand, Ashley  
Johnson, Jude  
Siva, Christina  
Sprague-Ballou, Jamie Lee  
Terrones, Hamleth  
Whitacre, Patricia

**Central Atlantic**

Bertalan, Julia  
Bright, Terri  
Faison, Robert  
Fuss, Bethany  
Graceffo, Simona  
Hendler-Voss, Amanda  
Jackson, Vivian  
Johnson, Kirk  
Jonas, Maeba  
Low, Katherine (Katie)  
Mercier, Ben  
Munroe, Kecia  
Nalla, Lacey

**Central Atlantic (con't)**

Robinson, Cynthia  
Simmers, Ellie  
Vassell, Andrea  
Winters, Bella

**Central Pacific**

Brownell, Ely  
Garrick, Valerie  
Manley-Smith, Nikki  
Rossio, Pam

**Florida**

Beneby, Vonshelle  
Carter, Michelle  
Ford, Michael  
Garcia, Jonah  
Geary, Pauline  
Harvey, Sheila  
Hutcheson, Sumner  
Jones, Lynn  
Jurskis, Lily  
Lightfoot, Rosemarie  
Lutz, Brad  
Martinez, Chance  
Rivera, Marcelino

**Hawaii**

Barfield, Heather  
Belsom, Jack  
Davis, Wendell  
Fujikawa, Clyde  
Jenks, Josann  
Kaauwai-Iwamoto, Linda  
Kiwaha, Wryen  
Kojima, Janice  
Kojima, Robb  
Walter, Lawrence  
White, Danielle  
Young, Kristen

**Heartland**

Albright, Kay

**Heartland (con't)**

Bechtel, Jan  
Borstad, Arik  
Brehler, Jim  
Bronnert, Luke  
Brookhart, Anthony  
Bruno, Karen  
Bullock, Marquis  
Burke, Brian  
Burt, Bobby  
Busch, Daniel  
Carter, Diane  
Chamberlin, MiMi  
Christopherson, Diane  
Court, Doug  
D'Agostino, Joanna  
Davis, Tina  
Davis, Zaria  
Dorsten, Kera  
Doty, Daniel  
Flewellen, Marla  
Fluent, Allen  
Fullen, Kendra  
Gudmundsson, Halldor Elias  
Hainer, Rhonda  
Hathaway, Tom  
Heilman, Ed  
Helleman, Kathryn  
Jindra, Leila  
Kagy, Tom  
King, John  
Koepf, Maren  
Lentz, Belinda  
Littlejohn, Ceola  
Marquette, Adam  
McDevitt, Keith  
Metz, Darla  
Nicholson, Nick  
Peacock, Jess  
Peterson, Katherine  
Pritt, Lori  
Ramirez, Kellie  
Rezac, Melodie

**Heartland (con't)**

Rogers, Earl  
 Rother, Sigrid  
 Saadiqah, Hafidha  
 Sledge, Delmarshae  
 Smith, Will  
 Snitker, Karsten  
 Strang, Becky  
 Vaughn, Ashley  
 Vaughn, Mark  
 Waddell, Brenda  
 Wanton, Jeremy  
 Ward Jr., Frank  
 Ward, Melody  
 Wealand, Joyce  
 Webber, Dale  
 Webber, Maureen  
 Weihe, Becky  
 Wilkey, Michelle  
 Wirrig, Adam  
 Wood, Bertrice  
 Zerby, David  
 Zwez, Tami

**Illinois**

Ables Fairman  
 Bamgbose, Ramona  
 Barrows, Brandon  
 Bell, Benna  
 Blackwell, Selena  
 Bohlmann, Lynn  
 Branham, Lesa  
 Carlson, Adam  
 Coatar, Jean  
 Coons, Mike  
 Cox, Gloria  
 Engelsdorfer, Theodore  
 Fairman, Hank  
 Fowler, Joycelin  
 Fraley, Nancy  
 Glover, Julie  
 Harding, Ken  
 Harrington, Sue  
 Hummel, Kathy  
 Immanuel, Jenita Kiruba

**Illinois (con't)**

Jacobs, Mark  
 Jahn, Muriel  
 Kennedy, Judith Steger  
 Kirk, Rachel  
 Kneip, Dennis  
 Kneip, Nancy  
 Knox III, Jesse  
 Lawes, David  
 Matarazzo, James  
 Newcomb, Mary  
 Notorangelo, Carr  
 Obert, Beverly  
 Paeth, Scott  
 Porrata, Nadine Rose  
 Potter, Ernest  
 Prain, Jon  
 Quinney-Burnard, Kay  
 Reese, Alicia  
 Reynolds, Allen  
 Sather, Daniel  
 Scheib, Sally  
 Seaton, Melody  
 Shelton, Kim  
 Sheneman, Rocky  
 Swick, Mary  
 Taylor, Lori J.  
 Tobey-Barrows, Rachel  
 Torres, Singent  
 Watkins, Wilbert O  
 White, Tim  
 Williams, Melissa  
 Wolfanger, Paige  
 Zavaski, Frank  
 Zavaski, Jill

**Illinois South**

Accola, Josiah  
 Atkins, Debbie Jo  
 Barbier, Philip  
 Beckmeyer, Mark  
 Bielke, Craig  
 Hoag, Eileen  
 Lambert-Goheen, Greg  
 Lambert-Goheen, Lauren

**Illinois South (con't)**

Powers-Reed, Tim  
 Ratcliff, Amy  
 Torigian, Michelle  
 Vaupel, Tarrah  
 Wagner, Don  
 Wood, Jeremy

**Indiana-Kentucky**

Anderson, Luke  
 Chambers, Georgia  
 Dewey, Deborah  
 Elliott, Kathi  
 Fischer, Nikita  
 Harbin, Izzy  
 Hayden, Adam  
 Ingram, Kyle  
 Iron Rope, Lakota  
 Jackson, Sr., John  
 Jones Mayfield, Lauren  
 Loane, Emma  
 Mosley, Sandra  
 Murphy, Timothy  
 Perkins, Fable  
 Roberts, Dakota  
 Tisheuar, Emily  
 Walton O'Bannon, Teresa

**Iowa**

Boogard, David  
 Breddin, Erika  
 Brown, Jim  
 Burnett, Jacqueline  
 Chaplin, John  
 Chronister, Abbie  
 Deranleau, Shonda  
 Gardner, Jennifer  
 Gardner, Leah  
 Griffith-Tierney, Lisa  
 Hughes, Brice  
 King, Kiahra  
 King, Steffany  
 Laube, Dixie  
 Marlin-Warfield, Christopher  
 Meyer, Scott

**Iowa (con't)**

Secor, Janet  
 Siefker, Todd  
 Van Weelden, Melanie  
 Weier, Susan  
 Wolf, Martha  
 Youngman, Judith

**Kansas-Oklahoma**

Bonewell, Kayla  
 Bounds, Emilee  
 Brannon, Cypress  
 Christofferson, Steven  
 Keesee, Marcia  
 Lord, Helena

**Maine**

Bartlett, Sara  
 Boyle-Wight, Patricia  
 Burgess, Susan  
 Fuller-Wright, Alexis  
 George, Stacy  
 Hilton, Henry  
 Kettell, Mairaine  
 Kozinski, Kate  
 Morrison, Holly  
 Tucker-Gahm, Robin  
 Whitman, Kelli  
 Woodside, Kathy

**Michigan**

Bahr, Jo  
 Barnum-Steggerda, Dan  
 Cross, P.L.  
 Goerg, Abbie  
 Green, Vita  
 Greenwood, Susan  
 Johnson, Stephen  
 Koppert, Jacoba  
 Larrivee, Elizabeth (Liz)  
 McCarroll, Angela  
 Miller-Purrenhage, Laura  
 Rieder, Aaron  
 Sapienza, Salvatore  
 Sims, Ralph

**Michigan (con't)**

Hinman, Andrew  
 Swayman, Sandra  
 Tinker Fortel, Lily  
 Veenstra, Danielle (Dani)  
 von Oeyen, Paul  
 Young, Lisa

**Minnesota**

Carroll, Eli'jah  
 Frantz, Charlotte  
 Griffiths, Justin  
 Kwong, Gary  
 Larson, Anna  
 Locula, Jerry  
 Marshall, Cole  
 McKee-Miller, Bree  
 Moore, Noah  
 Morse, Sara  
 O'Sullivan, Elizabeth  
 Orendorff, Matt  
 Sabia-Tanis, Justin  
 Warner, Jill  
 Wilgocki, Victoria

**Missouri Mid-South**

Cooper, Staci  
 Cope, Lorin  
 Fossey, Janet  
 Happel, Betsy  
 Jackson, Meredith  
 Jackson, Monty  
 Kemp, Leslie  
 King, Stephen  
 Linningham, Tammy  
 Love, Melinda  
 Moeller, Eric  
 Petry, Alysha  
 Rice, Hannah  
 Russell-Thomas, Duana  
 Sheridan, Ian  
 Shumway, Susan  
 Smith, Dan J  
 Strobel, Peter  
 Tebbenkamp, Elaine

**Missouri Mid-South (con't)**

Watkins, Camille  
 Windmann, Elizabeth

**Montana-N. Wyoming**

Folkwein, Laura  
 Spencer-Smith, Lynne  
 Wei, Charles

**Nebraska**

Hadler, Lisa  
 Langemach, Jana  
 Lassen, Adam  
 McCollister, Deb  
 Mitchell, Steven  
 Parish, Bobby  
 Parmenter, Coral  
 Sanders, Randy  
 Shear, Sue  
 West, Kate  
 Wolf, Alex

**New Hampshire**

Fay, Eliot  
 Jauhola-Straight, Carlos  
 Killinger, Anne  
 Kinney, Regina  
 Marean, Sara  
 Marean, Zeph  
 Muh, Alice  
 Mullens, Susan  
 Pontoh, Sandra  
 Sieverding, Thaddeus  
 Thomas, Jim  
 Ward, Harriet

**New York**

Blair, Jamani  
 Blue, Guinevere  
 Burtson, Belinda  
 Colden, Lynnette  
 Daugherty, Carole  
 Edwards, Lowell  
 Edwards, Patricia  
 Harris, Aja



**New York (con't)**

Henderson, Ryan  
 Hinman, Andrew  
 Howington, Therese  
 Jackson, Eric  
 Joseph, Jane  
 Kansfield, Ann  
 Ponnuraj, Christopher  
 Kirubainathan  
 Purnine, Marjorie  
 Roll, Dona  
 Schwartz, Hope  
 Sloan, Michael  
 Van Kennen, Judith  
 Ziino, Jabe

**Northern Plains**

Deeg, Gretchen  
 Millikan, Jane

**Pacific Northwest**

Brown, Indigo  
 Brown, Kelle  
 Marsden, Charnley  
 Pfeifer, Zoe  
 Weasley, Davi

**Penn Central**

Boyer, Andrew  
 Brown, Kathryn  
 Eckert, Brenda  
 Hein, Dwight  
 Hoey, Riley  
 Holm, Mark  
 Kast, Jes  
 Lambert, Julia  
 Landers, Gail  
 Lane, Fa  
 Nocheck, Lee  
 Nocheck, Libby  
 Rauch, Alice  
 Rudy, Susan  
 Saxton, Caroline  
 Shiflett, Ira Kelly  
 Strayer, Judy

**Penn Central (con't)**

Thomason, Jerry  
 Vines, Kristin  
 Worley, Zachary  
 Young, Frederick  
 Young, Glenn  
 Young, Lisa

**Penn Northeast**

Adams, David  
 Balliet, Lori  
 Barraco, Gary  
 Edwards, Denyse  
 Edwards, Gregory  
 Egan, Trudi  
 Gottwald, James  
 Hoyt, Patti  
 Lander, Chris  
 Lander, Douglas  
 Latshaw, Kathy  
 Lindquist, Helena  
 Marsch, Sandra  
 Martin, Teresa  
 Muschett, Amanda  
 Newett, Janet  
 Oesterle, Laura  
 Pyne, Jackson  
 Ringer, Brenda  
 Robison, James  
 Sausser, Rebecca  
 Schaeffer, Lee  
 Schaeffer, Suzanne  
 Schlegel, Virginia  
 Schnaars, Diane

**Penn West**

Farber, Kaitlyn  
 Garrett-Doege, Shannon  
 Hearn, Douglas  
 James, Ciera (Cici)  
 Jones, Kevin  
 Pickens, Nicole  
 Titus, John  
 Tuinstra, Roxanne

**Penn Southeast**

Adamson, Kim  
 Ames, Bob  
 Bauman, Jon  
 Bauman, Julia  
 Benner-Smith, Allen  
 Benner-Smith, Cole  
 Brossman, Caitlin

Brunton, Liz  
 Deerfield, Rick  
 Duffy-Guy, Maureen  
 Ely, Elaine  
 Hamilton, Selina  
 Hightower, Robin  
 Hoffman, Alec  
 Holler, Alison  
 Jackson, Nichole  
 James, Cean  
 Koppenhaver, Randy  
 Kozlowski, Linda  
 Krody, Nancy  
 Kuthuru, Charles  
 Miles, Alan  
 Mills, James  
 Mosier, Dwayne  
 Reed, Sheri  
 Regunesan, Immanuel  
 Riegel, Ray  
 Schwarz-Green, Peg  
 Schwarz-Green, Suzanne  
 Scott, William  
 Staley, Maxwell  
 Unell, Alisa

**Rocky Mountain**

Frye, Marcus  
 Golobic, Vicki  
 Ingram, Kenneth  
 Law, Angie  
 Lundberg, Dee  
 Parrish Lucas, Kelli  
 Smith, Ellie  
 Winkel, Karen  
 Zans, Jan

**South Central**

Drage, Michelle  
 Ehrke, Ken  
 Joseph, Debra  
 Malone-Miller, Cree  
 Monroe, Vanessa  
 Square, Brenda Billips  
 Thompson, C. Renee  
 Turner, Arlene

**South Dakota**

Jennys, David  
 Munger, Emily  
 Pagone, Becky  
 Peterson, Katherine  
 Reeve, Jay

**Southeast**

Carodine, Grant  
 Colf, Eddie  
 Hill, Tommy  
 Moran, Casey  
 Thornton, Joseph  
 Tillman, Ivy

**Southern**

Bailey, Tina  
 Best, Tanya  
 Copeland, Thelma  
 Crawley-Ricks, Patricia  
 Edwards, Rob  
 Fleming, Lucille  
 Hedgepeth, Toby  
 James, Brenda  
 Jones, Christopher  
 Leath, Gary  
 Longcrier, Reggie  
 Madison, Laura  
 Mattocks Ballard, Virginia  
 Morrison, Hugo  
 Parrish, Terry  
 Rostick, Neil  
 Schay, Peter  
 Shoe, CJ  
 Sledge, Belinda

**Southern (con't)**

Warren, Tom  
 Wood-Zealy, Kathy  
 Young, Meghan

**Southern New England**

Ackermann, Domenik  
 Allen, Vickey  
 Angerhofer, Rachel  
 Aoude, Joe  
 Ashe, Michael  
 Azevedo, Dale  
 Baker, Gregory  
 Barnard, Diane  
 Beebe, Diane  
 Bell, David  
 Bird, Robin  
 Brown, Hawley  
 Brown, Janet  
 Bruno, Martine  
 Buteux, Sarah  
 Davies, Chris  
 Davis, Cara  
 Davis, Shelly  
 Deater-Deckard, Lee  
 deLemos, Marc  
 deLemos, Wendy  
 Depaz, Cesar  
 Doktor, Chris  
 Doyle, Paul  
 Fazio, Katy  
 Fields, Nell  
 Fisher, Shawn  
 Frantzen, Kurt  
 Gage, John  
 Garrigan-Byerly, Liz  
 Gonzalez, Heather  
 Goodman, Liz  
 Goodman, Tobias  
 Goodwin-Brice, Kentavis  
 Gourlie, Noah  
 Hodge, Devale  
 Hofmeister, Margret  
 Hogue-Smith, Matthew  
 Holmes, Deb

**S. New England (con't)**

Hudler, Haley  
 Isbitsky, Adam  
 Jones, David  
 Jones, Phil  
 Joseph, Jake  
 Khan, Julia  
 Kogut, Patty  
 Krhla, Daniel  
 Krhla, Ryan  
 Laicher, Khaleigh  
 Lee, Kaylie  
 MacLennan, Patti  
 Mase, Meredith  
 May, Kent  
 McCarthy, Amie  
 Mereschuk, Chris  
 Newall, Jane  
 Newberry, Liam  
 Niebanck, Bryan  
 Nunn-Miller, Micki  
 O'Brien, Tom  
 O'Keefe, Kevin  
 Ogawa, Terry Yasuko  
 Olapade, Aaron  
 Olds, Jill  
 Olmsted, Kathy  
 Oughton, Doreen  
 Pabst, Lois  
 Page, Jonathan  
 Patenaude, Wayne  
 Patrick, Steven  
 Patti, Nathan  
 Patton, Alison  
 Perdue, Joe  
 Peterson, Lindsey  
 Plourd, Matthew  
 Rajaniemi, Tara  
 Rathbun, Marney  
 Rivera, Allison  
 Sage, Hillary  
 Scarborough, Megan  
 Schwartz, Rob  
 Shaver, Ruth  
 Solimene, Christopher

**S. New England (con't)**

Spencer Collins, Donna  
 Spencer, Audrey  
 Steinbrecher, Carol  
 Story, David  
 Streib, Michael  
 Sylvia, Timoth  
 Talley, Elliott  
 Taylor, John  
 Theodore, Miriam  
 Washington, Chontell  
 Washington, CJ  
 Wei, William  
 Whitaker, Albert  
 Will, Alex  
 Williams, Monet  
 Yaghjian-Tison, Brandon

**Southwest**

Franklin-Hicks, Davin "Dax"  
 Maga, Tulimalefoi  
 Roberts, Stan  
 Sims, Clara  
 Sternberg, Christine "Chris"

**Vermont**

Breuning, Fred  
 Cañas Parra, Eliana  
 Chapola, Ezra  
 Goldenbogen, Kevin  
 LoBrutto, Jane  
 McCaffrey, Leigh  
 McKerley, Kimberly  
 Ponder Williams, Andrew  
 Sangree, Paul

**Wisconsin**

Benjamin, Cathy  
 Bowles, David  
 de Jesus Bowles, Esperanza  
 Douglas, Jeannie  
 Eklund, Julie  
 Forbeck, Ken  
 Forray, Linda  
 Gross, Bob

**Wisconsin (con't)**

Gross, Sarah  
 Joshi, Shannon  
 Karch, Paul  
 Kay, Dawn  
 Kolb, Tom  
 Luedke, Elliott  
 Manley, Debbie  
 Mundell, Kelly  
 Mundell, Kevin  
 O'Brien, Kate  
 Parker, Kerri  
 Petzke, Beth  
 Pommerening, Jeff  
 Rakotojoelinandrasana, Asafa  
 Roloff, Ron  
 Rushfeldt, Heather  
 Russell, Ruth  
 Sadagopan, Nandini  
 Sadagopan, Tanya  
 Shannon, Wayne  
 Stalder, Laura  
 Tetzlaff, Tara

**HUGS**

Abang, Myrna-Lyn  
 Abrams, Allyson  
 Allen, Imani  
 Blue Coat, Louie  
 Brayton, Deborah Dee  
 Chancey, Jess  
 Colón, Stephen  
 Connelly-Vetter, Allison  
 Flag, JJ  
 Goodwin, Mimi  
 Hall, Susan M  
 Harvey, Ruth  
 Head, Tauoa  
 Jackson Wesley, Zillah  
 Johnson, Guy S.  
 Kneebone, Mak  
 Kuchma, Marty  
 Lesueur, Elizabeth  
 Littlegeorge, Larry  
 Payne, Averyn

**HUGS (con't)**

Perez Jr, Edwin  
 Prescod, Cecil  
 Reyes, Ernesto  
 Romero, Yinessa  
 Roseboro-Marsh, Katrina  
 Tamasese, Moegagogo  
 Tanuvasa, Leaoga Lee  
 Thomas, Jacob  
 Tialavea, Samuel  
 Tindell, Kevin  
 Tucker, Daniel  
 Walsh, Helen  
 Wilson, Jason Carson  
 DelCorazon, Sana  
 Young, Mitchell

**UCCB Members**

Ackerman, David  
 Bailey, Kearstin  
 Barr, Cameron  
 Bathke, Joyce  
 Blackmon, Traci  
 Bodager, Brian  
 Brewer-Wallin, Noah  
 Buck, Charles  
 Butts, Cynthia  
 Carlson, Molly  
 Chapman, Rachel  
 Chong, Eleanore  
 Connoley, Tyler  
 Cranbury, Hannah  
 Croner, Tom  
 Davis, Edward  
 Dobbins, Courtney  
 Dorhauer, John  
 Doyle, Jamar  
 Dutell, Mark  
 Edney Stilley, Shernell  
 Elliott, Derrick  
 Fields, Gabrielle  
 Folk, John  
 Gaughan, Julia  
 Goodwin, Darrell  
 Graham, Kevin

**UCCB Members (con't)**

Hachfeld, Tim

Hom, Richard

Jackson, Eric

Keene, Tracy

Kuthuru, Onyx

Muraki, Gloria-Ann

Murray, Janese

Prestemon, Shari

Quinerly, Jasmine

Rankin, Gordon

Richardson, Lawrence

Ruhl, Bethany

Sandman, Bob

Sinnaduray, A. Rushan

Smith, D'Angelo

Steever, Kylie

Thompson, Karen Georgia

Walker, Beth

Williams, Marsha

Zaragoza, Jeanette

**REPORT  
OF  
GENERAL SYNOD 34  
CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE**

The Credentials Committee is comprised of four United Church of Christ Board Governance Committee members. The Committee's role, described in UCC Bylaw 212, is to monitor the composition of the Conference Delegations attending General Synod for compliance with the diversity requirements as set forth in UCC Bylaw 195.

The Credentials Committee met on May 18, 2023, to review delegate registration data. As of May 8, 2023, 581 delegates were registered with 94 delegates still needing to register. In the review of the delegate demographics at the time, it was determined that as a Delegation, the Church was close to compliance with UCC Bylaw 195 which requires Conference delegations to be: (1) comprised of at least 50% lay persons; (2) reflect the UCC's commitment to be representative of people of diverse races and ethnicities; (3) reflect the UCC's commitment to representing diverse genders and gender expressions; and (4) comprised of approximately 15% youth and young adults. At the time of the initial review, the Delegation-as-a-Whole was comprised of 15% youths and young adult delegates, 59% women delegates, 51% lay delegates, and 23% of delegates of racially and ethnically diverse delegates.

Letters were sent to Conferences specifying where improvement in their delegations could be made.

Registration data was gathered for the final review at the close of online registration, which was June 12, 2023. At that time, 653 delegates were registered, with 50.38% of delegates being lay persons; 25.42% of delegates representing different racial and ethnic backgrounds; 58.19% of delegates identifying as women; 2.90% identifying as non-binary or gender fluid; and 14.85% of delegates under the age of 30.

The Conferences of the United Church of Christ have made a good-faith effort to meet the Bylaws requirement of having at least 20% of their delegates under the age of 30.

The Credentials Committee declares the Delegation-As-A-Whole in compliance with UCC Bylaw 195 at the Thirty-Fourth General Synod.

**THE FIRST REPORT OF  
THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST BOARD  
TO THE THIRTY-FOURTH GENERAL SYNOD**

<b>ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES</b>
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**It was VOTED:**

**UCCB-21-10-01** to approve the Agenda.

**It was VOTED:**

**UCCB-21-10-02** to approve the Consent Agenda.

**UCCB-21-10-02a** to grant voice without vote to the staff and others making presentations to the UCCB: Donyale Copeland, Cynthia Gaffney, Chante Jones, Heather Kimmel, Alisa Lewis, Tami Marinella, Kent Siladi, Cheryl Williams.

**UCCB-21-10-02b** to approve that the Clergy Housing Allowance under Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code and the regulations promulgated thereunder ("Section 107") during calendar year 2022 for each ordained minister in good standing with his or her respective denomination and any other "Minister of the gospel" within the meaning of Section 107, who is in the employ of a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ, shall be a sum equal to such employee's good faith estimate of the amount which will be excludible under Section 107 with respect to the providing of a home by such employee for such year; however, unless and until such employee shall provide in writing the estimate described above, the amount of said Clergy Housing Allowance for such employee shall be a sum equal to one third of such employee's gross salary compensation.

**UCCB-21-10-02c** to authorize the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance, the philanthropic arm of the Pension Boards-United Church of Christ to provide supplementation of small annuities, effective January 1, 2022 based on an income level of \$35,900 with three-fourths of that amount, \$26,925, as the level applicable in determining supplementation for a deceased member's surviving spouse/partner.

- UCCB-21-10-02d** to receive the 501(c)(3) Group Exemption Compliance Report.
- UCCB-21-10-02e** to approve the election of Deb Blood to the Board of Directors of the United Church of Christ Church Building and Loan Fund.
- UCCB-21-10-02f** to receive the minutes and written reports from the following Task Forces and Committees.
- It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-21-10-03** to approve the minutes of the July 1, 2021 meeting of the United Church of Christ Board.
- It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-21-10-04** to approve the minutes of the 33rd General Synod.
- It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-21-10-16** to move into Executive Session.
- It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-21-10-17** to return to Regular Session.
- It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-21-10-18** to approve the minutes of the July 1, 2021 Executive Session of the UCCB.
- It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-21-10-19** The UCCB expresses its gratitude to Rev. John Dorhauer for his ministry this year, and celebrates his gracious pastoral presence and faithful leadership. We give thanks to God for our General Minister and President and for the National Staff, and we offer our prayers of blessing for Rev. Dorhauer's sabbatical to be a period of sustained rest and renewal.
- It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-22-03-01** to approve the Agenda.
- It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-22-03-02** to approve the Consent Agenda.
- UCCB-22-03-02a** to grant voice without vote to the following staff, guests and others making presentation to the UCCB: Donyale Copeland, Sharon Fennema, Gabrielle Fields, Cynthia Gaffney, Heather Kimmel, Velda Love, Tami Marinella, Kent Siladi, Lisa Tabor, Cheryl Williams, Yvette Wynn, Chante Jones, Larry Bashe, Ron Patterson.

- UCCB-22-03-02b** to adopt the Governance Committee’s recommendation that the United Church of Christ Board adopts the distribution for Conference Delegates to the Thirty-fourth General Synod, totaling 677.
- UCCB-22-03-02c** to adopt the Governance Committee’s recommendation that the United Church of Christ Board continues to hold the following UCCB Executive Session Minutes as confidential for later review due to ongoing litigation: October 26, 2019, October 3, 2020.
- UCCB-22-03-02d** to adopt the Governance Committee’s recommendation that the United Church of Christ Board continues to hold the following UCCB Executive Session Minutes as confidential indefinitely due to a personnel matter: October 27, 2019; March 27, 2020; October 2, 2020.
- UCCB-22-03-02e** to adopt the Governance Committee’s recommendation that the United Church of Christ Board continues to hold the following UCCB Executive Session Minutes as confidential indefinitely due to a board member matter: October 3, 2020.
- UCCB-22-03-02f** to adopt the Governance Committee’s recommendation that the United Church of Christ Board approve the election of Rev. Charlene M. Hill and Rev. Dr. Gregory James Edwards to the Board of Directors of the Local Church Ministries Church Building and Loan Fund.
- UCCB-22-03-02g** to recommend that the United Church of Christ Board approve Philip Salmon and Frank Van Gansbeke to be eligible for election to the Board of Trustees of The Pension Boards - United Church of Christ, Inc. when a vacancy occurs.
- UCCB-22-03-02h** to recommend that the United Church of Christ Board approve the following rates by zone to be used in the calculation for the 2023 Conference Delegate travel pool as follows: 0-499 Miles \$0.04/mile; 500-999 Miles \$0.06/mile; 1,000 + Miles \$0.07/mile; Hawaii Conference \$14,000.00.
- UCCB-22-03-02i** to approve the Executive Committee’s recommendation that the UCCB elect Traci Blackmon and Karen Georgia Thompson as vice presidents of the United Church of Christ Board corporation, with powers and duties as delegated by the President of the corporation.



- UCCB-22-03-02j** to approve the Executive Committee’s recommendation that the United Church of Christ Board, sitting as the board of directors of Justice and Witness Ministries (a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ) elects Traci Blackmon and Karen Georgia Thompson as vice presidents of Justice and Witness Ministries (a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ), with powers and duties as delegated by the President of the corporation.
- UCCB-22-03-02k** to approve the Executive Committee’s recommendation that the United Church of Christ Board, sitting as the board of directors of Local Church Ministries (a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ) elects Traci Blackmon and Karen Georgia Thompson as vice presidents of Local Church Ministries (a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ), with powers and duties as delegated by the President of the corporation.
- UCCB-22-03-02l** to approve the Executive Committee’s recommendation that the United Church of Christ Board, sitting as the board of directors of Wider Church Ministries (a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ) elects Traci Blackmon and Karen Georgia Thompson as vice presidents of Wider Church Ministries (a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ), with powers and duties as delegated by the President of the corporation.
- UCCB-22-03-02m** to receive the minutes and written reports from the following Committees and Task Forces: Financial Sustainability Task Force.
- It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-22-03-03** to approve the minutes of the October 22, 2021 meeting of the United Church of Christ Board.
- It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-22-03-09** to go into Executive Session.
- It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-22-03-10** to return to Regular Session.
- It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-22-03-11** to approve Executive Session minutes from October 2021.

- It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-22-06-01** to approve the Agenda.
- It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-22-06-02** to grant voice without vote to David Anderson, Donyale Copeland, Heather Kimmel, Kevin Peterson, and other National Staff members present.
- It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-22-06-03** to approve the minutes of the March 11, 2022 Meeting of the United Church of Christ Board.
- It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-22-09-01** to approve the Agenda.
- It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-22-09-02** to grant voice without vote to Carrie Call (guest), Donyale Copeland, Cindy Gaffney, Heather Kimmel, Tami Marinella, Yvette Wynn (guest), and other National Staff members.
- It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-22-09-03** to approve the minutes of the June 2, 2022 Special Meeting of the United Church of Christ Board.
- It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-22-10-01** to approve the Agenda.
- It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-22-10-02** to approve the Consent Agenda.
- UCCB-22-10-02a** to grant voice without vote to the following staff, guests and others making presentation to the UCCB: Andrew Wells-Bean, Brooks Berndt, Donyale Copeland, Chris Davies, Cynthia Gaffney, Charles Jefferson, Heather Kimmel, Alisa Lewis, Tami Marinella, Kent Siladi, Cheryl Williams, Yvette Wynn.
- UCCB-22-10-02b** to approve that the Clergy Housing Allowance under Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code and the regulations promulgated thereunder ("Section 107") during calendar year 2023 for each ordained minister in good standing with his or her respective denomination and any other "Minister of the gospel" within the meaning of Section 107, who is in the employ of a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ, shall be

a sum equal to such employee's good faith estimate of the amount which will be excludible under Section 107 with respect to the providing of a home by such employee for such year; however, unless and until such employee shall provide in writing the estimate described above, the amount of said Clergy Housing Allowance for such employee shall be a sum equal to one third of such employee's gross salary compensation.

**UCCB-22-10-02c** to authorize the United Church Board of Ministerial Assistance, the philanthropic arm of the Pension Boards-United Church of Christ, to provide supplementation of small annuities at an income level of \$42,250 for retired clergy and lay employees and \$33,200 for the surviving spouse/partner of deceased members, effective January 1, 2023.

**UCCB-22-10-02d** to elect the UCC Media Justice Nominees to the UCC Media Justice Board.

**UCCB-22-10-02e** to receive the 501(c)(3) Group Exemption Compliance Report.

**It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-22-10-03** to approve the September 14, 2022 Special Meeting Minutes.

**It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-22-10-15** to go into Executive Session.

**It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-22-10-16** to return to Regular Session.

**It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-22-10-18** to approve the minutes from the Executive Session from March 25, 2022.

**It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-22-10-19** to adjourn.

**It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-23-03-01** to approve the Agenda as revised.

**It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-23-03-02** to approve the Consent Agenda.

**UCCB-23-03-02a:** to grant voice without vote to the following staff, guests and others making presentation to the UCCB: David Anderson, Donyale Copeland, Sharon Fennema, Cynthia Gaffney, Charles Jefferson, Heather Kimmel, Alisa Lewis, Tami Marinella, Walter Reyes, Kent Siladi, Cheryl Williams, Yvette Wynn.

**UCCB-22-03-02b:** to adopt the Governance Committee's recommendation that the United Church of Christ Board adopts the FINAL Group Exemption Compliance Report as set forth in Supporting Document UCCB-23-02-GOV-03 FINAL Group Exemption Compliance Report.

**UCCB-23-03-02c:** to adopt the Governance Committee's recommendation that the United Church of Christ Board release UCCB executive session minutes from February 2021 First Session; February 2021 Second Session.

**UCCB-23-03-02d:** to adopt the Governance Committee's recommendation that the United Church of Christ Board continues to hold the following UCCB Executive Session Minutes as confidential indefinitely due to a personnel matter: October 27, 2019; March 27, 2020; October 2, 2020.

**UCCB-23-03-02e:** to adopt the Governance Committee's recommendation that the United Church of Christ Board continues to hold the following UCCB executive session minutes confidential until further review: March 2021 (legal matter); July 2021 (legal matter); October 2021 (legal matter).

**UCCB-23-03-02f:** to adopt the Governance Committee's recommendation that the United Church of Christ Board continues to hold the following UCCB executive session minutes confidential permanently (personnel matter): October 2021.

**UCCB-23-03-02g:** to recommend that the United Church of Christ Board approve Emily McKenna, Rev. Freeman L. Palmer, and Charles Jefferson as nominees to the Board of Directors of UCC Media Justice Ministry (a.k.a. Office of Communication, Inc., OC Inc.), all for three-year terms.

**UCCB-23-03-02h:** to recommend to the General Synod Business Committee and on to the General Synod that the following group be accorded voice without vote at the 34th General Synod, under provisions of Rule 10 of the General Synod Standing Rules: Wellness Ministries.

**UCCB-23-03-02i:** to receive the minutes and written reports from the following Committees and Task Forces:

**It was VOTED:**

**UCCB-23-03-03** to approve the UCCB October Meeting Minutes.

**It was VOTED:**

**UCCB-23-03-13** to move into Executive Session (Board members only).

**It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-23-03-14** to return to Regular Session.

**It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-23-03-16** to move into Executive Session.

**It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-23-03-17** to move into Regular Session.

**It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-23-03-18** to approve the minutes of October 21, 2022 Executive Session.

**STANDING COMMITTEES**

**AUDIT COMMITTEE**

**It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-21-10-07** to receive the Combined Financial Report of the United Church of Christ Board and Certain Affiliated Entities dated December 31, 2020.

**It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-22-10-12** to receive the Combined Financial Report of the United Church of Christ Board and Certain Affiliated Entities dated December 31, 2021.

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-21-10-05** That the United Church of Christ Board, sitting as the board of Local Church Ministries (a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ), successor to the American Missionary Association, waive the right of reverter in the deed conveyed by the American Missionary Association in 1968 to New Emmanuel Congregational United Church of

Christ, in connection with a transfer of New Emmanuel's property to Cornerstone Fund or Cornerstone Fund's transferee in connection with a foreclosure of Cornerstone's deed of trust, deed in lieu or other transfer in lieu of foreclosure, and to authorize the UCC General Counsel and Secretary to execute any such additional documentation as may be required to reflect the release of the right of reverter.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-21-10-06**

to approve the withdrawal from membership in United Church of Christ Hotel Venture LLC the following corporations for which UCCB sits as the Board of Directors: Justice and Witness Ministries (a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ), Local Church Ministries (a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ), Wider Church Ministries (a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ), and United Church of Christ Board corporation.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-22-10-05**

to approve the submission to the Thirty-fourth General Synod of the Resolution Living into God's Economy: Celebrating the 170th Anniversary of the United Church of Christ Church Building & Loan Fund, as amended.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-22-10-17**

to authorize Karen Georgia Thompson, in consultation with the Office of General Counsel, to settle the lawsuit Jaffna College v. Trustees of Jaffna College Fund and Wider Church Ministries (a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ) by relinquishing any interest it has or may have as a contingent beneficiary of the Poor Fund in exchange for consideration deemed appropriate by Karen Georgia Thompson plus the payment of WCM's attorneys' fees as defendant in the case.

<b>FINANCE &amp; BUDGET COMMITTEE</b>
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**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-21-10-08**

to approve the proposed 2022 Combined Unrestricted Funds Budget with a total Revenues of \$19,898,977 and total Expenses of \$19,883,238 for the Office of the General Minister and President (OGMP), Justice and

Witness Ministries (JWM), Local Church Ministries (LCM), and Wider Church Ministries (WCM).

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-21-10-09**

to approve the National Basic Support allocation base of \$4,255,841 for 2022 and the funding to the Office of the General Minister & President, the Covenanted Ministries and the Pension Boards allocation as follows: Office of the General Minister and President (OGMP) \$1,167,604 or 27.4%, Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) \$1,884,435 or 44.3%, Local Church Ministries (LCM) \$259,998 or 6.1%, Wider Church Ministries (WCM) \$700,000 or 16.5% and The Pension Board \$243,805 or 5.7%.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-22-03-08**

to receive the National Basic Support projections and the preliminary and unaudited Income Statement and Balance Sheet, as presented.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-22-10-07**

to approve the proposed 2023 General Synod budget fee schedule as presented in the Budget Narrative.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-22-10-08**

to approve the proposed 2023 General Synod WIFI surcharge of \$25/person.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-22-10-09**

to approve the proposed 2023 General Synod budget with total Revenues of \$1,216,280 and total Expenses of \$1,284,811.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-22-10-10**

to approve the proposed 2023 UCCB Combined Unrestricted Funds Operating Budget with a total revenues of \$21,573,249 and total expenses of \$21,537,521.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-22-10-11**

to approve the National Basic Support allocation base of \$4,054,523 for 2023 with funding allocated to the Covenanted Ministries and the Pension Board as follows: Office of General Minister and President (OGMP) \$968,259 or 23.9%, Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) \$1,854,523 or 45.7%, Local Church Ministries (LCM) \$300,000 or 7.4%, Wider Church

Ministries (WCM) \$700,000 or 17.3% and The Pension Board \$231,741 or 5.7%.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-23-03-11**

to receive the preliminary and unaudited Combined Operating Income Statement and Balance Sheet for the year ended December 31, 2022, as presented.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-23-03-12**

to adopt and recommend to General Synod for adoption:

- 1) A projected National Basic Support allocation of \$3.67 million for the budget year 2024 and \$3.49 million for the budget year 2025; and
- 2) That the percentage allocations for 2024 and 2025 be based on the recommendation of the United Church of Christ Board.

**GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-21-10-11**

to initiate a task force led by Traci Blackmon to begin conversations with the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM) regarding securing a viable future for CAIM.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-21-10-12**

to adopt the attached amendments to the existing articles of incorporation of United Church of Christ Board corporation; and to further authorize the officers of the United Church of Christ Board corporation are hereby authorized and directed to prepare or cause to be prepared an appropriate certificate of amendment to execute such certificate as required and cause the same to be filed in the office of the Ohio Secretary of State and to take such further action, execute and deliver such other documents, and obtain all other such governmental approvals, as may be necessary or appropriate to carry out the purposes of this resolution.



- It was VOTED:  
UCCB-21-10-13** to adopt the attached amendments to the existing bylaws of the United Church of Christ Board corporation; and to further authorize the officers of the United Church of Christ Board corporation to take all actions necessary or appropriate to carry out the purposes of this resolution.
- It was VOTED:  
UCCB-21-10-14** to adopt a policy requiring demographic information from organizations for which UCCB nominates or elects the boards of directors.
- It was VOTED:  
UCCB-21-10-15** to approve the proposed amendments to the UCCB Standing Rules.
- It was VOTED:  
UCCB-22-06-04** to elect Gabrielle Fields to fill an unexpired board term for the class of 2023.
- It was VOTED:  
UCCB-22-06-05** to approve the Thirty-Fourth General Synod Standing Rules, with the changes discussed in committee.
- It was VOTED:  
UCCB-22-09-04** to affirm and move forward with the proposal of the General Synod Frequency, Form, and Function Task Force to move to a three-year General Synod term.
- It was VOTED:  
UCCB-22-10-13** to adopt the proposed policy as set forth in Supporting Document UCCB-22-10-GOV-04-FINAL Policy Removed\_and\_Inactive Churches.
- It was VOTED:  
UCCB-22-10-14** to approve and recommend to the General Synod the adoption of amendments to the United Church of Christ Bylaws as shown on Supporting Document UCCB-22-10-GOV-08, Proposed Amendments to UCC Bylaws, and to authorize the General Minister and President to do all things necessary to transmit the proposed amendments to General Synod delegates, Local Churches, and Conferences in compliance with Article XIV of the United Church of Christ Constitution.
- It was VOTED:  
UCCB-23-03-04** to approve the election of Cynthia Butts to fill unexpired board terms for the Class of 2025.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-23-03-05** to approve the election of Janese Murray to fill unexpired board terms for the Class of 2025.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-23-03-07** to nominate for election by the General Synod to the General Synod Nominating Committee Class of 2029 Andria Davis.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-23-03-08** to nominate for election by the General Synod to the General Synod Nominating Committee Class of 2029 Stephanie Perdew.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-23-03-09** to nominate for election by the General Synod to the General Synod Nominating Committee Class of 2029 Rebecca Sausser.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-23-03-10** to nominate for election by the General Synod to the General Synod Nominating Committee Class of 2029 Amy Roon.

**INVESTMENT & ENDOWMENT  
COMMITTEE**

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-21-10-10** to approve a draw rate of 4.75% on the unrestricted investment portfolio based on the average balance of the preceding 20 quarters for the year 2022.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-22-09-05** to approve a draw rate not to exceed 1% on the endowment funds that have an unrestricted purpose and those restricted with operational purpose investment portfolio based on the average balance of the preceding 20 quarters for the 2023 resulting in a combined Administrative Fee and Draw not to exceed \$9,094,180 for 2023.

**It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-22-10-06** to approve an additional \$2,627,806 for the 2023 budget.

**SPECIAL COMMITTEES, TASK FORCES AND TEAMS**

**AGM RENOMINATION COMMITTEE**

**It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-22-10-04** to renominate and recommend to the General Synod the re-election of Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson as Associate General Minister.

**GMP SUPPORT, EMPOWERMENT  
AND STRUCTURE TEAM**

**It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-22-03-07** to receive the report of the GMP Support, Empowerment, and Structure Team.

**GMP SEARCH  
AND  
TRANSITION TEAM**

**It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-22-03-05** to approve the Search Committee as presented.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-22-03-06**

to approve the engagement with the search firm Isaacson, Miller.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-23-03-15**

to accept the recommendation of the GMP Search Committee to nominate Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson for election by the General Synod to the office of General Minister and President.

**SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON  
RESOLUTION ON CHURCH  
WORKERS**

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-22-03-04**

to vote no on the Resolution on Protecting Workers at Churches and provide the proposed correspondence to the proponents of the Resolution outlining suggestions for possible future action.

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON DISPOSITION**

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-23-03-06**

Sitting as the General Synod Committee on Disposition, to adopt the Report of the Subcommittee on Disposition.

**THE SECOND REPORT OF  
THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST BOARD  
TO THE THIRTY-FOURTH GENERAL SYNOD**

**ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES**

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-23-05-01**

to approve the Agenda.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-23-05-02**

to grant voice without vote to Donyale Copeland, Cindy Gaffney, Heather Kimmel, and other National Staff members.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-23-05-03**

to approve the minutes of the March 3, 2023 Meeting of the United Church of Christ Board.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-23-05-06**

to move into Executive Session.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-23-05-07**

to return to Regular Session.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-23-05-08**

to approve the minutes of the March 5, 2023 Executive Session minutes.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-23-06-01**

to approve the Agenda.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-23-06-02**

to grant voice without vote to the following staff, guest and others making presentation to the UCCB: David Anderson, Donyale Copeland, Cynthia Gaffney, Charles Jefferson, Heather Kimmel, Tami Marinella, Cheryl Williams.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-23-06-03**

To approve the May 4, 2023 UCCB Special Meeting Minutes.

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-23-06-04**

Sitting as the Board of WCM, to approve the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Wider Church Ministries and the Kyoto District of the United Church of Christ in Japan and authorize the General Minister and President or their designated Associate General Minister to execute the MOU on behalf of WCM.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-23-06-05**

Sitting as the Board of WCM, to grant authority to the General Minister and President or their designated Associate General Minister, to take all necessary steps, in consultation with legal counsel, to authorize and effectuate the legal transfer of the Clapbard Inn property from the IBS-Shadan to the General Incorporated Foundation of Clapbard Inn, consistent with the Memorandum of Understanding with the Kyoto District and the United Church Board for World Ministries General Guidelines on the Disposition of Property.

**GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-23-06-06**

To approve the election of Matt Wagner to LCM Church Building & Loan Fund Board Class of 2025.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-23-06-07**

To recommend the UCCB amends the UCCB Standing Rules as set forth on Supporting Documents UCCB-23-06-GOV-12\_Memo-CGMB-Gov-Challenges and UCCB-23-06-GOV-13\_UCCB Standing Rules Revised CGMB Update.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-23-06-08**

To elect David Misemer to the United Church Funds, Inc. board class of 2029.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-23-06-09**

To elect Rev. Sharon K. Prestemon to the United Church Funds, Inc. board class of 2029.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-23-06-10**

To elect Yvette Michelle Wynn to the United Church Funds, Inc. board class of 2029.

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE FOR  
NEXT UCCB CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR**

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-23-05-04**

to elect Julia Gaughan as Chair of the United Church of Christ Board for the 2023-2025 biennium.

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-23-05-05**

to elect Jasmine Coleman Quinerly as Vice Chair of the United Church of Christ Board for the 2023-2025 biennium.

**SITTING AS THE BUSINESS  
COMMITTEE OF THE THIRTY-  
FOURTH GENERAL SYNOD**

**It was VOTED:  
UCCB-23-06-11**

To approve the Agenda of the Thirty-Fourth General Synod.

**It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-23-06-12** To grant voice without vote to General Synod Resource Persons as shown on Supporting Document UCCB-23-06-04-GS34 Resource Persons.

**It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-23-06-13** To receive the GS34 Credentials Committee Report.

**It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-23-06-14** To allow that the following group be accorded voice without vote at the 34th General Synod, under provisions of Rule 10 of the General Synod Standing Rules: Association of United Church Educators (AUCE).

**It was VOTED:**  
**UCCB-23-06-15** To allow that the following group be accorded voice without vote at the 34th General Synod, under provisions of Rule 10 of the General Synod Standing Rules: Faithful and Welcoming Churches.



**GENERAL SYNOD RESOURCE PERSONS**

Abbott, Chad, Presenter

Albertson, Lee, Voting Resource

Anderson, David, Committee Process Chair

Belsom, Caroline, Committee Process

Bolz-Weber, Nadia, Keynote

Brooks, Amy, Theological Reflector

Cable, La Marco, Presenter

Call, Carrie, Presenter

Copeland, Donyale

Dilley, Elizabeth, Presenter

Dorhauer, Mimi

Dugan, Patrick, Presenter, CBLF

Fosburgh, Heather, Parliamentarian

Frische-Mouri, Dennis, Committee Process

Gaewski, David, Floor Secretary

Jordan, Ray, Theological Reflector

Kimmel, Heather, General Counsel

Kramer, Andrew, Voting Resource

Larson, Corey, Agenda Coordinator

Lee, Jonathan, Presenter

Lemon, Shameerah, Registrar

Local Arrangements Committee Volunteers

Love, Velda, Presenter

Marinella, Tami, CFO, Presenter

Mosley, Roy, Committee Process

Movement Maker Awardees

National Staff

Peterson, Kevin, Committee Process Vice-Chair

Peterson, Terry, Voting Resource

Pettis, Mark, Presenter

Roberts, Diane, Recorder

Siladi, Kent, Presenter

Smith, Valerie, Associate GS Administrator

Townsley, Susan, Committee Process

Wade, Aaron, Presenter

Wagner, Matt, Presenter

Williams, Cheryl, Presenter

Williams, Terry, Parliamentarian

Wynn, Yvette, Presenter, Racial Justice Task Force

**UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST BOARD REPORT ON  
GENERAL SYNOD NOMINATING COMMITTEE NOMINEES  
CLASS OF 2029**

The United Church of Christ Board recommends the following individuals for election by the General Synod to the General Synod Nominating Committee class of 2029:

**ANDRIA DAVIS**

**Vote UCCB-23-03-07**

Andria Davis (she/her) is a European American, cis-gender, queer female. She is 34 years old. She holds ministerial authorization and serves as Executive Pastor of Worship and Digital Experience at Cathedral of Hope United Church of Christ in Dallas, Texas (South Central Conference). Andria previously served at Church of the Beatitudes in Phoenix, Arizona (Southwest Conference). She holds a Master of Divinity degree with a certificate in LGBTQ Studies from Chicago Theological Seminary. She is currently working on her Doctor of Ministry degree on preaching and stewardship at Chicago Theological Seminary. In addition to her ministerial roles, Andria has served in several community and Board roles, including on the South Central Conference Board of Directors and on the founding Board of Rebel & Divine, a new church start for LGBTQ Youth experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity in Phoenix, Arizona. Currently, Andria serves on the Board of the Baptist House of Studies at SMU Perkins School of Theology and as a member of the North Texas Association Committee on Ministry. Andria has served the General Synod on several occasions as both Delegate and Committee Chair.

Member of South Central Conference and is an Authorized Minister or Ordained Ministerial Partner

**Church Membership Information**

Cathedral of Hope United Church of Christ is located in Dallas, Texas (South Central Conference). Cathedral of Hope's membership as of January 2023 is 1,549. Our current worship attendance is 725. We are a predominately LGBTQ congregation with a broad digital reach outside of the DFW. Our demographic make up is approximately 45% white / Caucasian, 40% Hispanic, 10% Black / African American, and 6% Asian.

Cathedral of Hope 5910 Cedar Springs Road, Dallas, TX 75235

**Demographics:** Woman, both transgender & cisgender; Age 30-39; Member of LGBTQAI+ Community; White/European American

**STEPHANIE PERDEW**

**Vote UCCB-23-03-08**

Stephanie Perdew, M.Div., Ph.D. is originally from Lincoln, Nebraska, and is a tribal citizen of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma. She received her BA in Religion & Native American Studies from St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota. She received her M.Div. from Garrett Theological Seminary and was ordained to ministry in the Nebraska Conference United Church of Christ. She returned to Garrett to obtain her PhD in religious history and teaches at the seminary as an Affiliate Professor of Christian history. She served in parish ministry in the Illinois Conference UCC for twenty five years and has served on the adjunct faculties of McCormick Theological Seminary and the University of Chicago Divinity School. In 2021 she accepted a call to serve as Transitional Associate Conference Minister in the Illinois Conference. She is completing that work as she moves to her new call as Director of the Damascus Project, the collaborative theological education ministry of the Minnesota and Wisconsin Conferences UCC. Stephanie is a member of the North American Academy of Liturgy and serves on the Board of Directors of the Mitchell Museum of the American Indian in Evanston, Illinois, where she makes her home. She is a trained spiritual director, a sought-after speaker and educator, and frequently published author. Her article on best practices in land acknowledgements was recently published in *The Christian Century* (November 2022). She holds membership at the First Congregational Church UCC of Western Springs, IL and holds ministerial standing in the Chicago Metropolitan Association UCC.

Member of Illinois Conference and is an Authorized Minister or Ordained Ministerial Partner

### **Church Membership Information**

Local Church: First Congregational UCC, 1106 Chestnut Street, Western Springs, IL 60558

**Demographics:** Woman, both transgender & cisgender; Age 50-59; Indian/Native American

### **AMY ROON**

#### **Vote UCCB-23-03-09**

Reverend Amy Roon's educational background includes a Master of Divinity from the Pacific School of Religion (2002), and a BA in Vocal Performance from Oberlin College (1996).

She is currently part of the Leadership Team at University Congregational UCC as the Minister of Vision and Stewardship. She has been on the Leadership Team since Oct 2009 and has also worked extensively with their Christian Formation and Worship ministries. Prior to joining UCUC she served as Associate Pastor at the United Churches of Olympia and as Interim Pastor at Lummi Island Congregational Church.

Amy has leadership training in Stephen Ministry, BeFriender Ministry, OWL, and InterPlay and has participated in and helped lead these ministry forms in other churches and at University UCC.

Amy has tremendous passion and creativity, and is a musician with experience in piano, choral music, solo voice, and theater. She occasionally sings in worship, but generally prefers helping others to fulfill this role. She is an enthusiastic practitioner of InterPlay, a discipline that combines theater, dance, and spirituality.

Amy has one son, Benjamin, and having been a foster parent for over three years, continues to support her former foster daughter.

Member of Pacific Northwest Conference and is an Authorized Minister or Ordained Ministerial Partner

### **Church Membership Information**

University Congregational United Church of Christ, 4515 16th Avenue NE, Seattle, WA 98105-4201

We've been estimating our church size at between 600-750... COVID making this even harder than it was before. Our average weekly worship is roughly 225.

**Demographics:** Woman, both transgender & cisgender; Age 40-49; Black/African American; HUGS membership: MRSEJ; ONA; UBC

### **REV. REBECCA SAUSSER**

#### **Vote UCCB-23-03-10**

Rev. Rebecca Sausser is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ. Having received a call to ministry in high-school, she chose to focus her undergraduate studies on double majoring in History and Religion with a concentration in World Religions. She received her Master's in Divinity from Moravian University where she met her wife, Christina. She currently serves as the full-time solo-pastor at St. John's UCC in Allentown. St. John's UCC is an Open and Affirming, as well as a WISE (Welcome, Inclusive, Supportive, Engaged) congregation in the heart of the city of Allentown. In their more than 150 years of ministry they have been led by one mission, "Called by God we serve to be a welcoming community of faith for all".

Pastor Becky serves on the Executive Board of the Penn Northeast Conference of the United Church of Christ. She also serves on a number of ministry teams including the Racial Justice Team and the Mental Health Team. She created the PNEC Generosity Team. Her hobbies include spending time with her family and hiking! Her favorite Bible verse is Proverbs 3:5-6!

Member of Penn Northeast and is an Authorized Minister or Ordained Ministerial Partner.

### **Church Membership Information**

Local Church: St John's UCC in Allentown, 36 S. 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Allentown, PA 18101

**Demographics:** Woman, both transgender & cisgender; Age 19-29; Member of LGBTQAI+ Community; White/European American; Disability

## APPENDIX E

To all who love the United Church of Christ:

I am delighted to share that the Search Committee's recommendation and the United Church of Christ Board's nominee for General Minister and President is Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson. The committee was impressed by Rev. Dr. Thompson's pastoral presence and theological depth; bold vision for a decolonized Christianity and the United Church of Christ as a home for people with multiple religious belonging; dedication to collaborative leadership and bridge-building; and skill as a manager and administrator. Rev. Dr. Thompson is Jamaican and immigrated to the United States as a teenager with her parents. Her identities as Jamaican, an immigrant, and part of the African diaspora are central to her sense of self and approach to ministry.

The search committee for the General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ was established by the UCC Board of Directors in March 2022. An executive search firm, Isaacson, Miller was retained to support the work of the search committee and facilitate a comprehensive search process. The IM team, along with members of the GMP search committee conducted **14** listening sessions in 1-on-1, small group, and town hall formats to receive insights and recommendations from a broad cross-section of church members and leaders. Informed by the listening sessions, the GMP search committee published a detailed position profile that outlined the key opportunities and challenges as well as qualities and characteristics for the next GMP. The position profile served as the primary framework for the screening and assessment of candidates at each stage of the interview and selection process.

During the course of the GMP search, the search committee and/or our search firm partners actively engaged with **34** individuals who were nominated, expressed interest, or formally applied to be considered as a candidate. From that larger pool, the GMP search committee identified **6** individuals who were most qualified and aligned with the key opportunities and challenges, and qualifications and characteristics, outlined in the published position profile. While we are prevented by privacy considerations from releasing detailed demographic information about the pool of GMP candidates, we feel it is important to note that women and people of color were overwhelmingly represented in the field of qualified candidates. Following several stages of review of written candidate materials, video and in person interviews, presentations by the candidates, detailed referencing on the finalist candidates, and a sustained process of deliberation and discernment by GMP search committee, **Karen Georgia Thompson** emerged

as the GMP search committee's recommendation to the UCCB for nomination as General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ.

Rev. Dr. Thompson currently serves as Associate General Minister for Wider Church Ministries and Co-Executive for Global Ministries. She has served in the National Setting of the United Church of Christ since 2009, previously as Minister for Racial Justice and Minister for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations. Prior to joining National Setting staff, Rev. Dr. Thompson served on staff of the Florida Conference, as a church planter in Florida, and in family ministries in New York. Rev. Dr. Thompson is a highly-skilled leader with experience in multiple settings of the United Church of Christ and ecumenically. She holds a Doctor of Ministry, with a dissertation in religious multiplicity among African Caribbean people, from Seattle University, a Master of

Divinity from Union Theological Seminary, and a Master of Public Administration from North Carolina Central University.

In February, the Search Committee recommended Rev. Dr. Thompson, who then met with the United Church of Christ Board during their March meeting. The UCCB's affirmative vote nominated her to General Synod, the third and final body to discern and vote on her call to serve as General Minister & President.

The role of General Minister & President is considerable in its breadth, and the Search Committee is confident in Rev. Dr. Thompson's capacity to serve. We found that she particularly shines in the following areas, and I invite you to read more about her experience:

#### Pastoral Presence & Theological Depth

The Search Committee invited the finalist candidates to lead us in a time of worship, and Rev. Dr. Thompson shared a homily on Mark 9:24, *Lord, I believe, help my unbelief!* She interpreted this for us as, "God, you're possible, but this situation feels impossible," illuminating the paradoxes found in much of what we as a church, nation, and world face right now. Throughout our time together, Rev. Dr. Thompson's pastoral and non-anxious presence was a blessing.

In our conversations about local church life, Rev. Dr. Thompson addressed the paradox of human shortcomings and God's possibility by pointing to clergy exhaustion, the strain of the Covid pandemic, and the need for care, resources, and education for all church leaders. She described a desire to explore what is possible through relational work between the national setting and conferences. She is grounded in care for church leaders and the communities they serve, and this drives her to think imaginatively about what it means to develop financial resources to support and advance church life.

Rev. Dr. Thompson comes by attunement to the paradox of possibility and impossibility honestly. During her first interview with us, she shared about her upbringing in a conservative Christian tradition that did not serve her well as an adult, and which initially made it challenging for her to hear a call to ministry. She described an experience of hearing God's call repeatedly and in multiple forms – including through grappling with the spiritual dimensions of injustice and through experiences in nature, including on the Eno River in North Carolina. Her faith journey reflected experiences that members of the committee and others have in finding their way to the United Church of Christ after time spent in other traditions – and then seeking ways to integrate those spiritualities, theologies, and practices.



### Bold Vision

Continuing with her exploration of the possibility of God and the impossibility of the situation, Rev. Dr. Thompson reminded us of the membership decline of the UCC and other mainline denominations, affirming that “it doesn’t mean revival is impossible, it just means it’s not demographically based.” The hope she holds for revival is rooted in her experience as Minister for Racial Justice, where she led the rollout and expansion of the Sacred Conversations on

Race, her doctoral work focused on multiple-religious belonging, and her experience leading Wider Church Ministries, which does global work on a local scale.

Rev. Dr. Thompson inspired the Search Committee when she paired the apparent hopelessness of declining church membership with the possibility of people who are seeking places to form community, to make meaning of life’s challenges, and to serve their neighbors. She suggests that among people who might be seeking such a home are the “spiritual-but-not-religious,” families who are connected to multiple religious traditions, and people who follow teachings and practices of Christianity alongside another tradition. She affirmed that many UCC congregations are already a place of sanctuary for these kinds of people, and proclaimed the possibility of continuing to foster this type of ministry without letting go of the Christianity that makes us who we are.

Rev. Dr. Thompson also touched the committee deeply in her proclamation that we need to decolonize the church and its structures. She spoke with pastoral and prophetic truthfulness in naming that the U.S. is currently the largest colonizer globally and that the Church has been remiss in not yet owning our role and repenting. She affirmed the role of the General Minister & President in leading the church through conversations about what our institutions look like and how our histories and experiences perpetuate the injustices we long to eradicate from the life of the church.

### Collaborative Leadership & Bridge-Building

In a time of national discord and when the potential for competition between settings of the church occasionally gets the best of us, the Search Committee sought a candidate who centers collaboration and bridge-building, and found such a leader in Rev. Dr. Thompson. From her role as Minister for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations, Rev. Dr. Thompson has strong experience building, mending, and formalizing relationships with church bodies with whom the UCC shares history and values, including the United Church of Canada and Iglesia Evangélica Unida de Puerto Rico.

In her role as Co-Executive for Global Ministries, alongside her counterpart from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Rev. Dr. Thompson has demonstrated her facility with relational and collaborative leadership in situations that require navigating numerous stakeholders and multiple decision-making structures. We believe this experience will serve her well in facilitating collaborations across multiple settings of the UCC for the good of the whole church.

Throughout our conversations with her, Rev. Dr. Thompson consistently uplifted the work of her colleagues in the national setting, saying again and again “none of this is work I do alone.”

Manager & Administrator

Rev. Dr. Thompson's care for the staff she works with, supporting them both as people and as leaders, emerged clearly in our conversations with her. She described a practice of leadership development that considers the big picture of the whole church, not only those who are currently working for her, to help ensure that new and emerging leaders are prepared when opportunities to serve arise.

In addition to her aptitude as a manager, Rev. Dr. Thompson has demonstrated her savvy of the behind-the-scenes aspects of administration. Her experience overseeing several multi-million dollar budgets for Wider Church Ministries, General Synod, Global Ministries, and One Great Hour of Sharing prepares her to secure the financial strength of the UCC through sustainable, wise, and responsible fiscal management. As General Synod Administrator, Rev. Dr. Thomson emerged as a key pastoral leader during the church's early experience of the pandemic, adapting our Thirty-Third General Synod to a digital environment. Her long tenure with the national setting means she knows the inner workings of the UCC well, and she has put that knowledge to use in strategizing the realignment of the Common Global Ministries Board with the UCCB.

The church has repeatedly affirmed Karen Georgia Thompson's ministry throughout her tenure in multiple roles of progressive responsibility in the National Setting. After a thorough review by the board, she was recently nominated for a second term as Associate General Minister, though she subsequently withdrew her name from the AGM nomination upon receiving the GMP nomination. With equal confidence in her capabilities as a minister, theologian, and spiritual leader for our church, the Search Committee and UCCB enthusiastically recommends her as our nominee for General Minister and President.

If she is elected at General Synod, Rev. Dr. Thompson will vacate her current role as Associate General Minister and assume her new responsibilities as General Minister and President on August 1, 2023. Following General Synod, the UCCB will work closely with the new GMP to oversee a process for appointing an Acting Associate General Minister to fill the vacant AGM position from 2023 to 2025, at which point the next General Synod would be prepared to elect an Associate General Minister.

Faithfully,

Rev. Noah Brewer-Wallin  
Chair, General Minister & President Search Committee

**REPORT REGARDING THE NOMINATION OF THE CANDIDATE FOR  
GENERAL MINISTER AND PRESIDENT**

On March 4, 2023, the United Church of Christ Board voted to nominate and recommend to the General Synod the election of Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson for a term as General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ, and submits its nomination for consideration by the delegates to the Thirty-Fourth General Synod, meeting June 30-July 4 in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Heather E. Kimmel  
General Counsel and Corporate Secretary  
March 6, 2023

## Report on Salaries of the Covenanted Ministries

In 1981 the General Synod requested that salaries of \$50,000 and over be reported to the General Synod. Although the realities of what a \$50,000 salary means has changed since the initial Synod action, the action has remained in place and salaries of \$50,000 and over have been reported to the Synod with no consideration of inflation.

In 2002, the Executive Council acting as the General Synod ad interim, in a spirit of openness, but recognizing the inflationary factors since 1981, requested that the report of salaries to the General Synod include the salaries of the Officers of the United Church of Christ and the salary grid with the number of employees in each salary grade for the four Covenanted Ministries.

### Base Salary Information for the Officers of the United Church of Christ

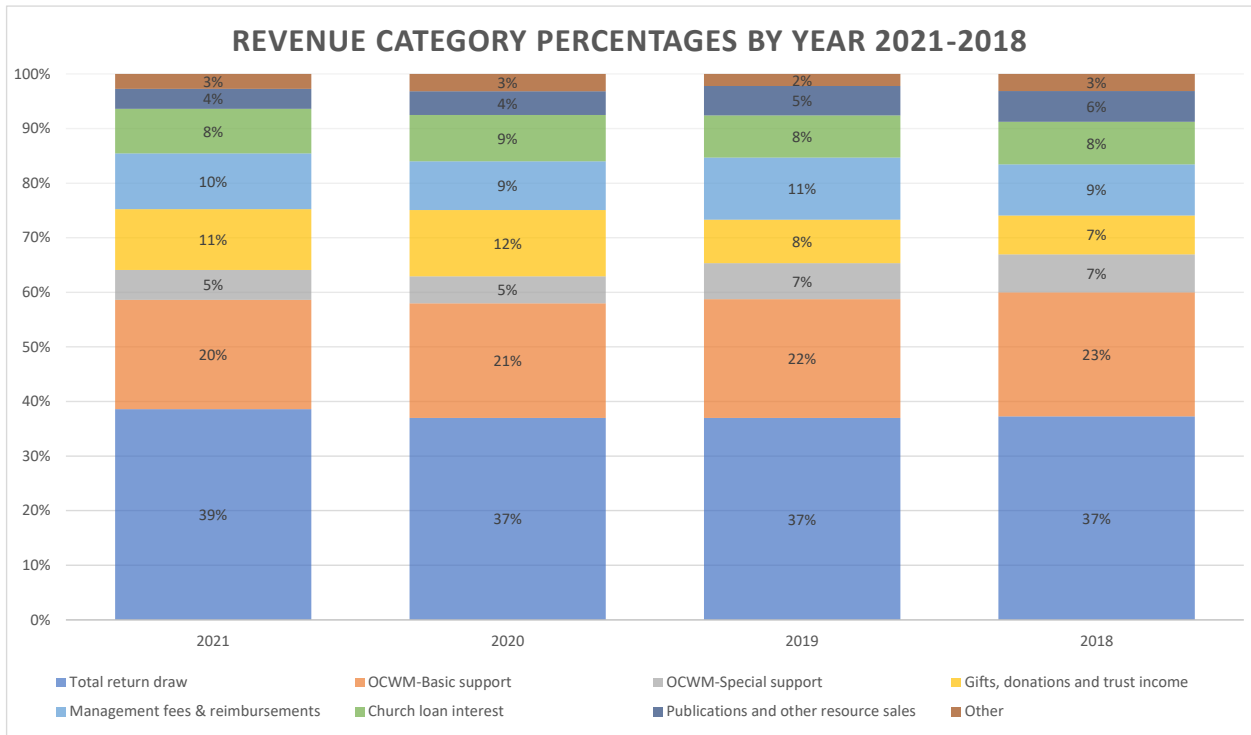
General Minister and President..... \$215,363  
Associate General Ministers.....\$175,100

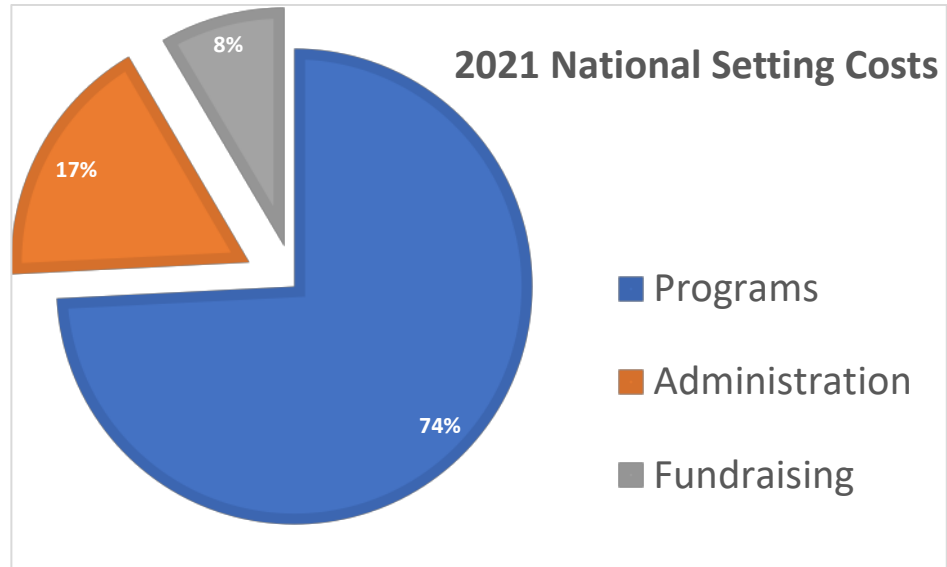
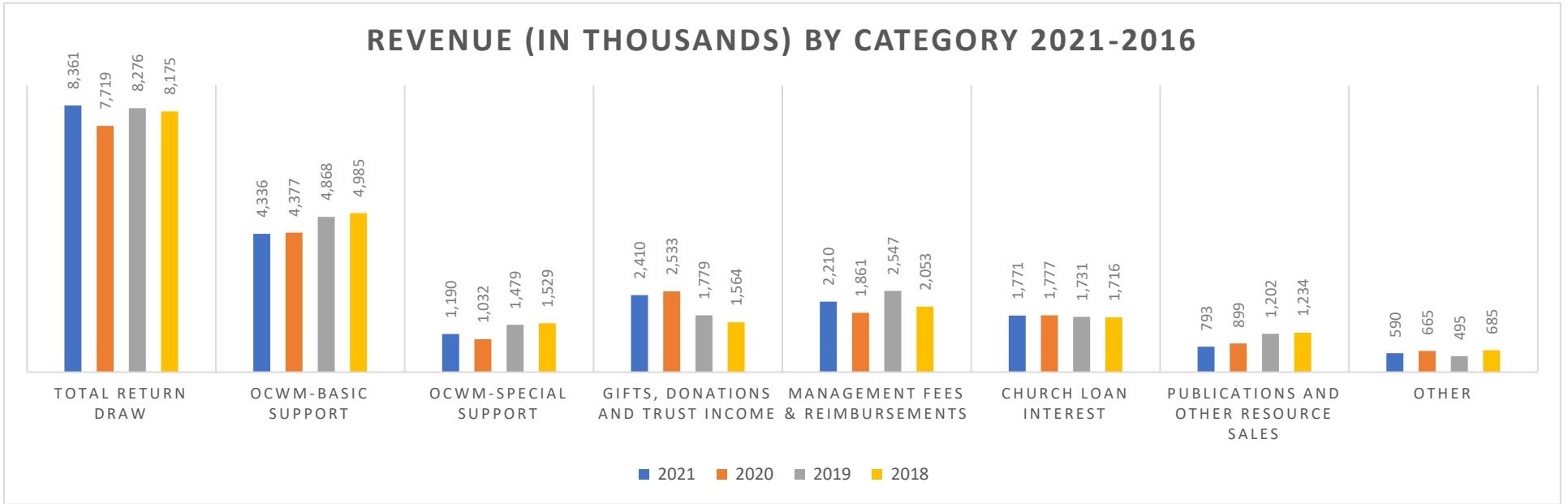
	MINIMUM	MIDPOINT	MAXIMUM	# of employees
G13	\$127,050	\$165,000	\$202,950	3
G12	\$109,380	\$142,050	\$174,720	4
G11	\$86,480	\$112,310	\$138,150	4
G10	\$69,170	\$89,830	\$110,490	12
G9	\$57,630	\$74,840	\$92,050	17
G8	\$49,940	\$62,430	\$74,910	34
G7	\$43,550	\$54,440	\$65,330	20
G6	\$37,950	\$47,430	\$56,920	5
G5	\$33,030	\$41,290	\$49,550	12
G4	\$28,800	\$36,010	\$43,210	2
G3	\$25,170	\$31,460	\$37,750	1
G2	\$21,920	\$27,400	\$32,880	0
G1	\$19,070	\$23,840	\$28,610	0

APPENDIX H

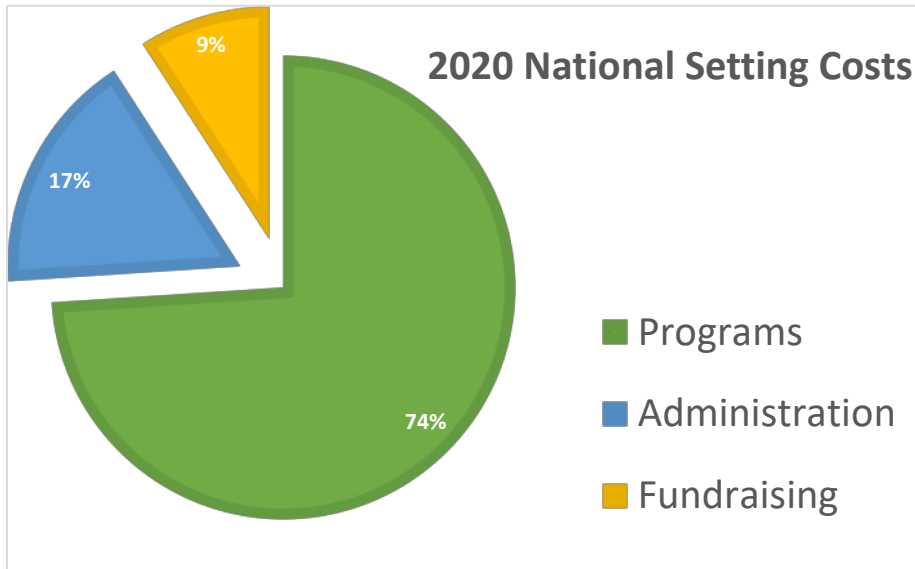
In thousands of Dollars, except for %

	2021		2020		2019		2018	
	\$	%	\$	%	\$	%	\$	%
Operating revenues and support:								
Total return draw	8,361	39	7,719	37	8,276	37	8,175	37
OCWM-Basic support	4,336	20	4,377	21	4,868	22	4,985	23
OCWM-Special support	1,190	5	1,032	5	1,479	7	1,529	7
Gifts, donations and trust income	2,410	11	2,533	12	1,779	8	1,564	7
Management fees & reimbursements	2,210	10	1,861	9	2,547	11	2,053	9
Church loan interest	1,771	8	1,777	9	1,731	8	1,716	8
Publications and other resource sales	793	4	899	4	1,202	5	1,234	6
Other	590	3	665	3	495	2	685	3
<b>Total Operating revenues and support</b>	<b>21,661</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>20,863</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>22,377</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>21,941</b>	<b>100</b>





	2021		2020	
Programs	18,498,050	74	18,193,862	74
Administration	4,327,449	17	4,152,743	17
Fundraising	2,104,413	8	2,248,736	9
	<u>24,929,912</u>	<u>99</u>	<u>24,595,341</u>	<u>100</u>



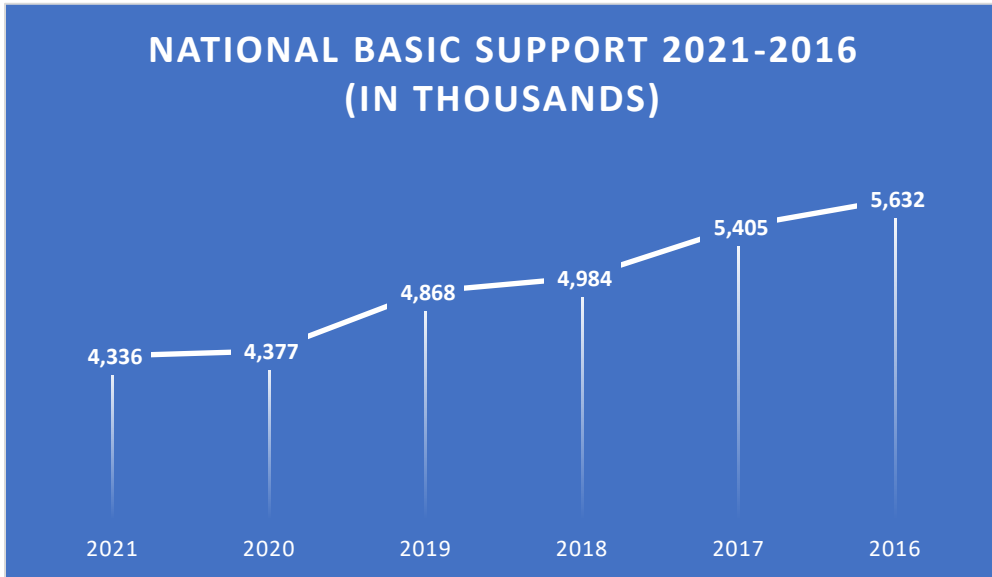
In thousands of Dollars, except for %

	2022*		2021		2020		2019		2018	
	\$	%	\$	%	\$	%	\$	%	\$	%
<b>OCWM-Special Support (Operating):</b>										
Neighbors in Need	834	77	920	77	825	80	1,144	77	1,177	77
Strengthen the Church	226	23	270	23	207	20	335	23	352	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,060</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,190</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,032</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,479</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,529</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>OCWM-Special Support (Non-Operating/Pass-Through):</b>										
One Great Hour of Sharing	1,693		1,760		1,155		1,983		1,951	
Christmas Fund	100		324		186		382		588	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,793</b>		<b>2,084</b>		<b>1,341</b>		<b>2,365</b>		<b>2,539</b>	

\* Unaudited

In thousands of Dollars, except for %

	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
National Basic Support	4,336	4,377	4,868	4,984	5,405	5,632





APPENDIX I

**First Report of the General Synod Nominating Committee  
Class of 2029 At Large Nominees to the United Church of Christ Board  
Thirty-Fourth General Synod**

The General Synod Nominating Committee presents the slate of nominees for the delegates' consideration. This is a non-compliant slate as we did not meet the guidelines for members under the age of 30 or the lay/clergy ratio. The lay percentage requirement is 66 percent. We were able to meet the criteria at 61.1%. The slate meets the requirement for all other bylaw criteria related to the composition of the board.

The General Synod Nominating Committee always works diligently to meet these criteria. The pool of candidates applying for elected positions continues to decline with each biennium. This time we had zero applicants in the under 30 category. The number of lay candidates continues to decline even as clergy candidates increase. This year we did not have enough lay applications to meet the criteria.

We also had no lay candidates for the Assistant Moderator/Moderator positions which necessitated re-opening that nomination process. The previous biennium we had one lay candidate for these positions. We have taken measures to increase the visibility of calling for nominations but we need the assistance of the whole church to identify candidates who are willing to apply for any elected position at General Synod.

One other consideration is geographic diversity. Those numbers by region for the current board and current nominees are as follows:

Great Lakes 6  
Mid Atlantic 7  
New England 5  
Southern 2  
West Central 6  
Western 9

As chair of the General Synod Nominating Committee, I would be happy to talk with anyone with questions, shared experience, or ideas about the nomination process.

June Boutwell  
revjuneb@gmail.com

# BIOGRAPHIC STATISTICS

## UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST BOARD

### United Church of Christ Board

(35 At-Large Positions)

	Count	Board Percentages
Gender non-conforming	1	2.8%
Woman, both transgender and cisgender	21	58.3%
Man, both transgender and cisgender	13	36.1%
Non-binary	0	0.0%
Authorized Minister or Ordained Ministerial Partner		
Standing	14	38.9%
Lay Males	7	19.4%
Lay Females	14	38.9%
African American	15	41.7%
Hispanic	3	8.3%
Native American	0	0.0%
Pacific Island	0	0.0%
Asian American	3	8.3%
Total People of Color	21	58.3%
European American	14	38.9%
60+	14	38.9%
50-59	4	11.1%
40-49	6	16.7%
30-39	7	19.4%
19-29	4	11.1%
Youth	0	0.0%
Disability	8	22.2%
LGBTQAI+ Community	13	36.1%

## **First Report of the General Synod Nominating Committee**

### **Class of 2029 At Large Nominees to the United Church of Christ Board**

**Judith Booker** is a proud member of Plymouth United Church of Christ, Detroit, MI, and currently serves as the Board President of the Michigan Conference United Church of Christ. As a member of the Conference's Faith Formation Mission Area Team and Prophetic Integrity Mission Area Team, Judith is honored to serve a wider community regarding church growth and social justice issues. She serves the United Church of Christ as a member of the Committee on Ministry, Detroit Metropolitan Association. During the Michigan Conference's recent pursuit for a Transitional Conference Minister, Judith led the process as the Chair of the Search Committee. In addition to her current leadership roles, she was the Moderator of the Detroit Metropolitan Association as well as the Michigan Conference UCC. She continues to champion the Michigan community as a Board member of the Emergency Food and Shelter Program through the United Way for twenty years.

Motivated by a desire to give more to her local church, Judith made the key decision to join the Deacon Board and to later become its President. The fulfillment that she received from that ministry led her toward the Revelation Dance Ministry, where she received the deepest sense of joy and peace. In this creative space, God made room for her additional gifts and talents. Her work as an interior designer for homes, department stores, office buildings, and Detroit Public School spaces, prepared her to be a contributing designer for many of her group's liturgical dance garments.

**Women, both Transgender and Cisgender, 60+, Layperson (Not Ordained), Black/African American, Michigan Conference**

**Deborah Dee Brayton** is a lifetime member of St. Albans Congregational Church UCC, located in St. Albans Queens, New York. This Servant Leader has served in many positions in her local church, Association, Conference and Nationally in the denomination. Currently she serves on the Board of the Directors of the New York Conference. She is a member of the New York State Department of Health Faith Communities Project AIDS Institute and a Lifetime Member of Girl Scouts of the USA. Deborah Dee is the First Vice President of the United Black Christian and Editor of UBC's e-newsletter Harbari Gani. She is also a member of the Council for Racial and Ethnic Ministries (COREM). She has a Masters of Social Work degree from Hunter College School of Social Work. Deborah Dee Brayton is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker recently retired after 40 years of service with New York City Health and Hospital Corporation. Her vocation as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker has been a blessing for her church and community as she continues to provide needed resources and advocate for holistic care for all persons.

**Women, both Transgender and Cisgender, 60+, Layperson (not ordained), Black/African American, Disability, UBC, New York Conference**

**Sana Delcorazon** is a student at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities pursuing a Masters in Divinity and is a Member in Discernment with Tabernacle United Church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Sana serves on the board of the Colectivo Latinx Ministries and Encuentros Latinx and co-chairs the UCC student group at United. Sana holds a Masters in Public Affairs from Princeton University and a Masters in Clinical Social Work from Smith School for Social Work. She has trained as a spiritual director with Still Harbor and has worked in social services and community mental health. She is interested in the evolution of the church and the intersection of racial justice, queer theology, reconciliation, and the beloved community.

**Women, both Transgender and Cisgender, 40-49, Layperson (Not Ordained), Hispanic/Latino/Latina, LGBTQAI Community, Colectivo de UCC-Latinx, Pennsylvania Southeast Conference**

**Daniel Doty** was baptized and confirmed in the United Church of Christ. Dan attended Bowling Green State University (OH) where he earned a bachelor's degree in Music Education. He taught music in the public schools of Ohio for four years before answering his call to ministry.

Dan earned his MDiv degree from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary (Evanston, IL.) Dan served UMC churches in Illinois and Ohio. Upon receiving Privilege of Call in the UCC, Dan served as Senior Minister of Trinity UCC (Wadsworth, OH) and The Bath Church (Akron, OH). He served as Interim Minister of the Westerville Community UCC (Westerville, OH.)

Dan taught in lay speaking schools and for the Northeast Ohio School of Ministry. He specializes in Hymnody/Worship, Biblical Interpretation and New Testament. He also taught "In the Footsteps of Paul," a course developed from his sabbatical trip to Turkey.

Dan is actively involved in Kirchengemeinschaft and currently serves as the co-chair of the UEK Forum for the national setting.

He is the author of a two-article series "Last Supper, Lord's Supper" published in *Sacramental Life* (OSL Publications.)

Dan is a classically trained opera singer and lived in Italy and sings with symphonies and community bands throughout the Midwest. In May of 2017 he made his singing debut in Carnegie Hall NYC.

Currently Dan serves as the Senior Minister at First Congregational Church of Tallmadge. Dan lives in Wadsworth with his wife Amy and is the proud father of two daughters Kristian and Kaetlyn, a newlywed son Sean and daughter-in-law Sara.

**Men, both Transgender and Cisgender, 50-59 Holds Ministerial Standing, White/European American, Heartland Conference**

**Jimmy Leon Gibbs** is a lifelong resident of the Cary/Raleigh North Carolina area earning accolades in vocal performance. He pursued additional degrees and is a non-practicing RN. He has worked in radio, television, and print media as a reporter, on air personality, and creator of the show “Snapshot” on WRAL-TV, Raleigh, NC. He has had long careers at Marriott Corporation, The Herald Sun and IBM. His passions are HIV education, scientific research, and community engagement.

He is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ and is a certified interim minister. In 2023, he was appointed as a Police Chaplain with the Raleigh Police Department.

He serves on both the Eastern North Carolina Association Board and the Southern Conference Board of Directors and the personnel committee of the United Church of Christ.

He currently serves as Vice President of the Affordable Community Residence Association Board (ACRA), and President Emeritus. ACRA provides housing and supportive services for people living with disabilities and HIV.

He is the former longtime secretary of the He is currently Chair of the National Center for AIDS Research Community Advisory Board CAB

He serves as a healthcare and business consultant, intentional interim minister, and community engagement strategist.

He lives in Raleigh with his partner Anthony Woodward and their two fur babies TommyCat and Nutmeg.

**Gender non-conforming, 60+, Holds Ministerial Standing, Black/African American, Disability, LGBTQAI Community, MRSEJ, Open and Affirming Coalition, UCC Disabilities Ministry, UCC Mental Health Ministries, UBC, Southern Conference**

**Cean James** is the Senior Pastor of Salt & Light, an interdenominational, intergenerational congregation worshipping and working in Southwest Philadelphia and Mt. Airy. In 2005, Pastor James planted Grace Christian Fellowship (GCF) as a nondenominational church to serve the poorest, sickest, and least educated section of Philadelphia: Southwest Philadelphia. GCF united with the United Church of Christ in 2012 and also planted a satellite congregation in Mt. Airy, that same year.

In 2020, GCF merged with New Spirit Community Church to form Salt & Light. Even though the merger was finalized during the pandemic, Salt & Light has experienced exponential growth and is now a 1000+ -member congregation. Salt & Light is as a congregation of passionate worship, empowered leadership, warm hospitality, intergenerational ministries, and generous missionary work in the community and beyond.

Rev. James completed his undergraduate studies at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University with a BS in biology and received his Masters of Divinity from the Lutheran

Theological Seminary of Philadelphia. Pastor James has also done doctoral work at Lancaster Theological Seminary.

Pastor James also serves the wider church as the Associate Conference Minister of Congregational Development for the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference, UCC. Pastor James is the Director of the CityLights Network, a capacity-building nonprofit in Southwest Philadelphia. Pastor James is also a board member of United Lutheran Seminary, The Common Place, and Chestnut Hill Youth Sports Association.

**Men, both Transgender and Cisgender, 40-49, Holds Ministerial Standing, Black/African American, Disability, LGBTQAI Community, UBC, MRSEJ, UCC Mental Health Ministries, Pennsylvania Southeast Conference.**

**Marcia Keesee** is a member of Fellowship Congregational UCC in Tulsa, OK. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of Tulsa and a Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy from Southern Nazarene University. After a 20+ year career building services and supports for children/youth and families with emotional and behavioral health needs, Marcia's passion and priorities shifted from focusing on clients/consumers to supporting employees. Her present focus is helping to create a corporate culture that values diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, learning, and development. Currently, she is the Chief Learning and Diversity Officer for a large comprehensive community behavioral health center in Eastern Oklahoma. Marcia is a Licensed Professional Counselor, Registered Play Therapist, and Certified Diversity Executive. She is also an adjunct professor at Tulsa Community College, where she teaches in the Human Services Department.

**Women, both Transgender and Cisgender, 40-49, Layperson (not ordained), Black/African American, Disability, Kansas-Oklahoma Conference**

**A.T. Ortíz** (she/her) is the Associate Pastor at Glenside UCC and serves as a founding co-chair of the Racial Justice Initiative of the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference. A bi-vocational minister, A.T. has been an associate pastor for 20 years. She has worked on behalf of socio-economic justice with a variety of communities and community-based organizations throughout her career. She is the Associate Dean for Equity, Inclusion, and Community Life at Bryn Mawr College. Prior to her work at Bryn Mawr, A.T. spent 17 years on the leadership team of a local nonprofit organization in Philadelphia where she worked closely with low-income, first generation to college students and their families as they navigated the challenges of preparing for and completing college. A.T. has served in a variety of professional roles as educator, facilitator, and consultant around cross-cultural competencies, anti-racism, and other areas related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. A proud Latinx from Santa Fe, NM, A.T. has worked in a number of urban and rural communities in the Southwest, West, and Eastern United States. A.T. holds a specialized Ed.M. in Human Development and Psychology from Harvard University and an M.A. in Holistic Spirituality from Chestnut Hill College. She earned her B.A. in English, B.S. in Psychology, and graduated with an emphasis in Ethnic Studies from Santa Clara University.

**Women, both Transgender and Cisgender, 50-59, Holds Ministerial Standing, Hispanic/Latino/Latina, LGBTQAI Community, Pennsylvania Southeast Conference**

**Michael J. Readinger** retired from The Council for Health and Human Service Ministries, United Church of Christ in April 2022. He was called to the role of President & CEO in November of 2014. He previously served as CHHSM's vice president from February 2005 to November 2014, after working at Morgan Stanley in Cleveland, where he was an associate vice president/financial advisor for 12 years. Prior to his work in financial services, Mike was involved in a number of entrepreneurial endeavors in the restaurant and club industry, specializing in management accounting systems.

Mike holds a BA in psychology from Case Western Reserve University and an MBA in finance from Cleveland State University. Mike is recognized as a CHHSM Diakonal Minister, having graduated from the Faith Based Leadership Institute in 2006. He is also a 1995 graduate of United Way's Leadership Development Program Cleveland.

Mike previously served on the United Church of Christ Board, the National Benevolent Association Board of Trustees, and the Western Reserve Association (Living Waters Association) investment advisory committee. Previous service includes Moderator of Amistad Chapel United Church of Christ, board member and chair of United Church Funds, board chair of the Cleveland Synergy Foundation, and board chair of the AIDS Taskforce of Greater Cleveland. Mike is a member of Lakewood Congregational Church and splits his time between Cleveland, Ohio and Palm Springs, California with his husband Bob Vinkler.

**Men, both Transgender and Cisgender, 60+, Layperson (Not ordained), White/European American LGBTQAI Community, Heartland Conference**

**Gregory Sato** is a member of Central Union Church in Honolulu, Hawaii, where he is currently a leader on the council and serves on a number of committees. He is an attorney with Kobayashi, Sugita & Goda, LLP, practicing in the area of labor and employment. He currently serves as the president of the board of trustees for Hanahauo'oli School, is a member of the board of directors of Asset School, and is a hearing officer for the Hawaii Office of Disciplinary Counsel. His past service has included serving on the board of directors for Hawaii Public Radio, the Hawaii Girl Scout Council, the Hawaii Chamber of Commerce, and other service organizations. Greg enjoys spending time with his parents, his wife, and four adult children, as well as his senior dog, at his home in Hawaii, where he is continuously inspired by the view and the sounds of the ocean—which surely means God is speaking. He looks forward to hearing the stories of God's blessings from others on the UCCB.

**Men, both Transgender and Cisgender, 60+, Layperson (Not Ordained), Asian/Asian American, Hawaii Conference**

**Katharine (Kate) West** is the pastor of Park Center UCC and First Congregational UCC in Antelope County, Nebraska. A graduate of Transylvania University and Lexington Theological Seminary, Kate is passionate about rural communities. From disaster recovery to social justice advocacy, Kate seeks to find ways to reach people where they are to share God's radical hospitality and love. As a member of the Nebraska Conference and Tri Conference Board of Directors, Kate works to strengthen the UCC on all levels and to support laity, clergy, and congregations as they transition into the Kin-dom of God.

**Women, both Transgender and Cisgender, 40-49, Holds Ministerial Standing, White/European American, Nebraska Conference**

**Andrew Williams** hopes to inspire and engage all people through invitational and intergenerational congregational ministry. He is the Pastor of United Community Church UCC in St. Johnsbury, Vermont. Andrew has served congregations along the California Coast, in the Southwest, and in New England.

Andrew has a passion for social justice ministry and has been involved in advocacy on Capitol Hill and at the United Nations. He previously has served as a Campus Minister at the University of California, Irvine and Arizona State University. Andrew was ordained in the Southwest Conference of the United Church of Christ.

Andrew received a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Philosophy from Rockhurst University, Jesuit, and a Graduate Certificate in Religion, Activism, and Social Justice from Claremont School of Theology. Andrew is presently continuing his learning at Boston University School of Theology where he studies Religious and Public Leadership.

Andrew and his husband Ashton live in St. Johnsbury, Vermont. Andrew is a vegetarian of 20 years and enjoys running, hiking, traveling, and dining out.

**Men, both Transgender and Cisgender, 30-39, Holds Ministerial Standing, White/European American, LGBTQAI Community, Vermont Conference**



APPENDIX J

**Second Report of the General Synod Nominating Committee  
Moderator & Assistant Moderator Nominees for the Thirty-Fifth General Synod  
Thirty-Fourth General Synod**

**Moderator**

**Andrew Rushan Sinnaduray** is the Founding and Lead Pastor of The Oasis United Church of Christ in Jefferson City, Missouri. Within the Missouri Mid-South Conference, he serves as Co-Chair of the Western Association Committee on Ministry and has served on the Associate Conference Minister Search Committee for the Conference. Rushan was born and raised in Sri Lanka and has lived and worked in New Zealand, Canada and the USA. He was ordained in 2008 and has served churches in New Hampshire, Connecticut and Missouri. He is passionate about church planting, church vitality and growth, musical theater, and the interactions between popular culture, science and theology. Rushan and his spouse, Arushini, have two children: Aran and Alisha.

**Men, both Transgender and Cisgender, 50-59, Holds Ministerial Standing, Asian/Asian American, Missouri Mid-South Conference**

**Assistant Moderator**

**Jean Avison** is a member of Bethel Congregational United Church of Christ in Beaverton, Oregon. At Bethel, Jean serves on the Diaconate and Investment committees and is chair of the Nominations committee. Other past local church roles have included; Moderator, Treasurer, and chair of the Trustees. In the Central Pacific Conference, Jean serves as Co-chair of the Committee on Ministry and has formerly served as Moderator and Treasurer. In the National Setting of the UCC, Jean has served on the Executive Council (a predecessor body of the UCC Board), Chair of the Committee on Disposition for 2 General Synods, and as chair of the UCC General Synod Nominating Committee. In addition, Jean also served as a recorder at GS 30 in Cleveland, Ohio.

Jean brings to the position her passion for the United Church of Christ, as well as experience and skills in education, group facilitation, strategic planning, organizational development, process improvement and project management.

Jean is retired, after 35 years as a corporate training manager. She and her husband, David, have a blended family of four grown children, eight grandchildren and one very spoiled Golden Retriever, Gracie (never place a period where God has placed a comma).

**Women, both Transgender and Cisgender, 60+, Layperson (Not Ordained), White/European American, Central Pacific Conference**

**GENERAL SYNOD OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST****GENERAL SYNOD 34****JUNE 30-JULY 4, 2023****RESOLUTION REPORT****Resolution 21-GS-48 Hawaiian Kingdom****A Resolution Encouraging to End 128 Years of War Between the United States of America and the Hawaiian Kingdom****Report Submitted By:      Rev. Dr. John C. Dorhauer, General Minister & President**

The action items called for in the Resolution are as follows:

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon all settings of the church, denomination officers, conferences, associations, and congregations to live into the 1993 Apology of the United Church of Christ delivered to the Native Hawaiian People by President Paul Sherry;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that we call upon the United Church of Christ's General Counsel's office to listen to and consider recommendations from the Association of Hawaiian Evangelical Churches, other Native Hawaiian organizations, and Native Hawaiian voices drafting communications to local, national and international leaders and organizations calling for compliance with international humanitarian law and an end to the illegal occupation of the Hawaiian islands;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** the Thirty-Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ reaffirm its commitment to stand alongside and in support of the efforts of Native Hawaiians to seek redress and restitution for the war crimes of the US against the Hawaiian Kingdom including, but not limited to, the crime of denationalization;

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the United Church of Christ Board will provide the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ with a written and oral update on the progress on the implementation of this resolution.

Here are the actions taken by the denomination officers in response to the first item:

Several calls with AHEC leaders were made early in the year to arrange what became two listening sessions to hear the deep history of the native Hawaiian communities, the blatant racism experienced throughout the history of the island following the arrival of European settlers and missionaries, to speak about how that pain can be acknowledged, and to test pathways to resolving that pain and injustice. Two extended listening sessions were arranged with the Elected Officers and Board leaders present.

Regarding the second item from the resolution, this provision was drafted without input from the Office of General Counsel or the Office of General Minister & President, which oversees the Office of General Counsel. These activities are both outside of the scope of the General Counsel's role and inconsistent with rules of professional conduct under the law of the state of Ohio, relating to the attorney-client relationship and professional competency. She was not able to draft communications to local churches, national and international leaders and organizations calling for compliance with international humanitarian law and an end to the illegal occupation of the Hawaiian Islands. These are matters outside of the General Counsel's scope of practice. This was communicated to AHEC shortly after the resolution was adopted. No such letter went forth from the Office of General Counsel.

Those are all the action items requested by the Resolution – and a full report of all matters regarding compliance with those requests for which the UCCB has the responsibility for compliance and the authority to report.

**GENERAL SYNOD OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

**GENERAL SYNOD 34**

**JUNE 30-JULY 4, 2023**

**RESOLUTION REPORT**

**Resolution 19-GS-11 Basic Unit of Life**

**Discerning, Articulating, and Resourcing the Nature, Purpose, Composition, Covenantal Autonomy and Definition of ‘the basic unit of life and organization of the United Church of Christ’ for the Twenty-first Century: A Prudential Resolution**

**Report Submitted By: Rev. Tracy Howe, Team Leader and Minister for FaithINFO**

The Manual on Church working group is in the writing and testing stage with several sections able to be released at General Synod 34, including the “Definition of Local Church,” “New and Renewing Churches Joining the UCC,” and “Marks for Faithful and Vital Local Churches.” These sections will be shared through a workshop and the release of the “Grow Your Church” game, an engaging way to interact with people in your local church and learn the Marks for Faithful and Vital Local Churches developed for the Manual on Church.

Bringing the Manual on Church to this point has included research across the denomination in the form of surveys, interviews, case studies and presentations and feedback at the 2022 AM21 gathering. As a completed draft of the Manual on Church is expected by the end of 2023, the working group is shifting towards working with Conferences, Associations and Local Churches to further “test” and receive feedback and data. This will likely come in the form of some regional and virtual events in 2024.

At this time, the Manual on Church Working Group is not recommending amendments to the United Church of Christ Constitution; the need for amendments will be assessed in connection with feedback and data received on the Manual on Church.

**GENERAL SYNOD OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST****GENERAL SYNOD 34****JUNE 30-JULY 4, 2023****RESOLUTION REPORT****Resolution 17-GS-17 Pattern of Giving****A Resolution Declaring the Work of the Pattern of Giving in the United Church of Christ Complete and on Proposing a New Framework for Covenantal Giving and Implementing Fundraising Best Practices****Report Submitted By: Rev. Andrew Warner, CFRE, Generosity Outreach Officer, National Ministries**

The Thirty-First General Synod adopted a resolution that redefined the concept of covenantal giving in the United Church of Christ. The resolution grew out of a multiyear study by the Giving Taskforce under the direction of the United Church of Christ Board. The taskforce engaged a wide array of stakeholders and settings of the church. (The full resolution and taskforce report can be found at [A New Ecology of Generosity 2016](#). The resolution can be found on pp. 23-25 of the [GS31-Minutes-Final](#)).

The resolution made six important changes:

- Celebrated and declared complete the work of the previously adopted “Plan on Giving” that long defined covenantal giving in the UCC.
- Advised all settings to develop new fundraising programs that address the needs of all settings of the church, are donor-centered, and encourage both congregations and individuals to give directly to the mission priorities most compelling to the donor.
- Directed the national setting to provide resources to increase the fundraising capacity of all settings of the church.
- Continued the movement of Our Churches Wider Mission – Basic Support from congregations to Conferences; and from Conferences to the national setting. Further, the resolution called on Conferences to maintain their Basic Support average sharing ratio from 2014-2016 for the five years from 2018 through 2022. After five years of stability in sharing ratios, the resolution recommended a conversation between conferences and the national setting on the sharing ratios.
- Encouraged a cost-benefit analysis of the four special mission offerings: One Great Hour of Sharing, Strengthen the Church, Neighbors in Need, and the Christmas Fund.
- Recommended a marketing analysis of the names “Our Church’s Wider Mission,” “Our Church’s Wider Mission – Basic Support,” and “Our Church’s Wider Mission – Special Support.”

Five full years after the adoption of this resolution, we want to look back to evaluate the progress made, continuing challenges encountered, and unexpected lessons learned.

**Plan of Giving Completed**

The resolution acknowledged the important work of the Plan of Giving at one historical moment of the United Church of Christ. It met the needs of the 1950's church, especially as we brought together different branches of Protestantism into a new denomination. Over time, our church and society changed and faced new situations. We needed a new understanding of covenantal giving that focused on mission instead of institutional maintenance.

Five full years later, moving away from the Plan of Giving continues to prove difficult. Financial practices of congregations, conferences, and the national setting remain rooted in the Plan of Giving instead of being rebuilt along donor-centered principles. For example, all settings of the church lag behind nonprofit industry standards in acknowledging gifts (3 days is industry norm). Additionally, the Giving Taskforce Report called for a streamlining of our pass-through practices such that congregations would be encouraged to send their funds directly to the end-recipient mission. While the national setting has directed Christmas Fund Offerings to flow from conferences directly to the Pension Boards, much remains to streamline and shorten the distance from donor to destination. Moving forward, we need our treasurers and financial teams to critically reflect on their current practices, asking: how can donor-centered principles be better implemented?

We would suggest a few metrics for moving towards better donor-centered giving:

- Thanking: many congregations only thank a donor once a year; Conferences and the national setting acknowledge gifts more frequently, but all settings have work to do in more speedily thanking donors. We can all ask: How long does it take us to acknowledge a gift? What could we change to get closer to acknowledging gifts within three days of receiving it?
- Pass-throughs: the resolution sought to shorten the distance between donors and the destination of their giving by reduce the number of "pass-throughs." Much generosity continues to flow through intervening church layers. We can ask: How long does it take us to send a pass-through gift on to the intended organization or mission? What could we change to send all pass-through gift on within one month? How does our acting as a pass-through organization add-value to the gifts we pass along?

### **New Approaches to Giving**

The United Church of Christ Board and its Development Committee engaged in several reviews of the Giving Taskforce work and conducted another round of inquiry on the "Financial Sustainability of the National Setting." The taskforce charged with this question looked at both the creation of a foundation for the national setting and other ways to generate revenue. After substantial conversation, the taskforce did not opt to pursue the creation of a foundation at this time. Instead, the taskforce recommended, and the board approved an increase in the staffing of the Philanthropy Team. The expanded Philanthropy Team will include 6 regionally based Generosity Officers to amplify connection with donors across the country.

The Philanthropy Team developed an increased capacity to promote multiple giving options at the same time. The team now runs concurrently an annual campaign, two to three multiyear capital campaigns, targeted micro-campaigns, and special initiative asks of major donors. From 2017 to present, this work helped significantly offset the losses experienced in Our Church's

Wider Mission giving. The expansion of the Philanthropy Team will further increase the ability of the team to generate resources for our national ministries.

While there is always more to do in creating new approaches to giving, the UCCB and Philanthropy Team aligned their vision for the national setting with this resolution.

### **Increasing Training for Fundraising**

Early in the implementation of the resolution on giving, the United Church of Christ Board heard the importance of fundraising capacity building from our conference partners. The Philanthropy Team added a part-time staff person to increase the number of fundraising trainings offered. Working with the Lake Institute of the School of Philanthropy at Indiana University, the Philanthropy Team offered a variety of best-practice educational opportunities for Conference leaders. The national setting also increased the training opportunities available to congregational leaders, many of these offered in conjunction with conference partners.

The national setting has long produced a stewardship resource for congregations. We renewed a partnership with the Disciples of Christ to jointly produce resources, resulting in a higher quality product.

The national setting created a case statement to guide its fundraising efforts. National staff worked with interested Conferences to develop Conference case statements.

Over the last five years, several Conferences took concrete steps to add or expand fundraising professionals to their staff. This move, at times funded in part by the Council of Conference Ministers, significantly increased the capacity of the Conferences.

### **OCWM Basic Support**

Hopes for stability in OCWM Basic Support proved to be a systemic challenge.

The resolution left in place the movement of OCWM Basic Support from congregations to Conferences and then from Conferences to the national setting. While the structure remained, the results continued a decades long decline. Several trends shaped this:

- General giving to congregations increases or decreases with church membership. Over the last 11 years, membership in aggregate declined by 28% and giving by 26%.
- Congregations retain more of their contributions for their own local expenses; less is passed on to Conferences.
- Conferences retain more of what they receive for their own conference mission; fewer resources are sent to the national setting.

The first trend remains the most important; declining membership results in declining Basic Support. Stated another way, we do not have a fundraising problem but an evangelism problem.

The resolution invited conferences to hold their OCWM Basic Support steady by maintaining their average sharing ratio of 2014-2016 for the years 2018-2022. For the most part, conferences were not able to sustain their sharing ratio. The aggregate sharing ratio declined from 26.84% as the average of 2014-2016 to 21.70% in 2021. Several conferences did implement the call of the resolution. The Iowa, Kansas-Oklahoma, Maine, South Dakota, and Southern Conferences

increased the portion of OCWM Basic Support shared with the national setting. The Central Pacific, Florida, Hawaii, Minnesota, and Pennsylvania Southeast Conferences all held steady or increased the percentage shared with the national setting.

The resolution, along with the more recent Sustainability Taskforce of UCCB, encouraged a conversation between conference and national leaders about OCWM Basic Support. Given the persistent declines in congregational gifts to OCWM Basic Support and increased conference retention, a conversation about the future of OCWM Basic Support seems imperative.

### **Special Mission Offerings**

The resolution encouraged a broad review of the Special Mission Offerings – One Great Hour of Sharing, Strengthen the Church, Neighbors in Need, and the Christmas Fund. While not called out in the resolution, the Giving Taskforce report additionally called for a review of the 5-for-5 program.

#### *Cost-Benefit*

The special mission offerings advance our shared mission as the United Church of Christ. One Great Hour of Sharing provides resources to domestic and global ministry partners for alleviating issues related to refugees, disaster relief, and sustainable development. Strengthen the Church is equally shared by the national setting and conferences. Neighbors in Need supports both justice ministries and the Council on American Indian Ministries. The Christmas Fund equips the United Board for Ministerial Assistance of the Pension Boards to provide assistance to church workers.

The fundraising results vary widely between the offerings. OGHS continues to raise the greatest number of resources. Fundraising costs vary too, with Strengthen the Church being the least expensive (and least generative) offering. In general, for each dollar spent on fundraising costs, the offerings raise between \$15 and \$35 for mission. These fundraising results out-perform typical non-profit fundraising because of the significant but uncounted promotional efforts of our local congregations (e.g., the passionate church member who gives a testimony about OGHS or the pastor offering a NIN-inspired sermon).

In terms of the cost-benefit analysis requested by the resolution, we see tremendous value in continuing the special mission offerings.

#### *Declining Fundraising Results*

The resolution was drafted at a time when special mission offerings held steady against a persistent decline in OCWM Basic Support. Over the last five years, the special mission offerings and OCWM Basic Support giving declined at the same rate. The earlier trend – which we no longer see – may have been a response to the Great Recession piquing interest in special offerings for numerous reasons (e.g., public need, economic uncertainty stressing congregational budgets but not individual wallets). In the current moment, we see special mission offerings trending on the same path of decline as OCWM Basic Support. This suggests a relationship between declining OCWM Basic Support and declining special mission offerings that may call for a holistic strategy to remedy. Resources spent on raising Basic Support may lift special mission offerings too.



5-for-5

The 5-for-5 designation arose as a marketing strategy to promote the Strengthen the Church Offering when it began over 25 years ago. During the period of 2017 to 2021, the percentage of UCC congregations that are 5-for-5 declined from 32.7% of congregations to 25.6%. At one-time, 5-for-5 may have increased church participation, but the marketing benefit lapsed over time (e.g., in 2003 22.9% of churches took the STC offering; this rose in 2013 to 40.2%; it then declined in 2021 to 34.3% of congregations). The program does not meaningfully attain its marketing objectives.

At the same time, the 5-for-5 strategy reflects an older concept of loyalty giving out-of-sync with the donor-centered approach of our new understanding of covenantal giving. It creates odd scenarios. For example, one mid-sized congregation sent a check to its conference for \$25 - \$5 for Basic Support and each of the 4 special mission offerings. It was celebrated as a great 5-for-5 congregation. Another small congregation held 3 fundraisers to send in \$1000 for Basic Support. For all their effort, they received no special mention.

Finally, the need to “get credit” towards the 5-for-5 designation keeps many of our settings locked into the old Plan of Giving formula of routing dollars around to various places before reaching its final destination.

As a marketing strategy, 5-for-5 does not appear to be working as designed and does not encourage a donor-centered approach. We recommend declaring the work of the 5-for-5 strategy complete and moving instead of a strategy that celebrates donors who champion a specific offering.

**Marketing Analysis**

The resolution called for a marketing analysis of the names used for Our Church’s Wider Mission and its constituent parts. Unexpected challenges affected the implementation of this recommendation. Most notably, a staff-reduction at the national setting in 2017 eliminated two positions intended for OCWM promotion and subsequent staff changes further delayed action. We recommend the United Church of Christ Board continue to monitor this resolution task for implementation as resources allow.

APPENDIX N

**GENERAL SYNOD OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
GENERAL SYNOD 34  
JUNE 30-JULY 4, 2023  
RESOLUTION REPORT**

**Resolution 21-GS-14 United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent**

**A Resolution to recognize the United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024): A Resolution of Witness**

**Report Submitted By: Rev. Dr. Monica Dawkins-Smith, Executive Associate, Wider Church Ministries**

The United Church of Christ reestablished its presence at the United Nations with racial equity named as a priority for the programmatic and advocacy work. The office will have a staff person who will be following the work at the UN including the Decade. The work of the United Nations is a part of Wider Church Ministries.

Ms. Donna Bollinger was hired in May 2023 as the UCC Representative to the United Nations. Most recently Donna served as the Advocacy Officer for the World Council of Churches Ecumenical Office to the United Nations in NYC where she implemented programming addressing the challenges of gender equality and ending gender-based violence, indigenous issues, racial justice, and economic development. In addition to monitoring the work and finding ways for UCC engagement, Ms. Bollinger will also be providing opportunities for global advocacy training for UCC members.

The Join the Movement toward Racial Justice campaign, launched at General Synod 33, continues to engage the themes of the UN Decade as it focuses on racial justice in the United States context.

A UCC delegation attended the first session of the Permanent Forum for People of African Descent (12/5-12/8/22) in Geneva, Switzerland. The UCC is providing a leadership role through the World Council of Churches in providing inputs into the work of the Permanent Forum and other mechanisms related to this International Decade for People of African descent.

Webinars and other resources like the *State of Global Racial Justice webinar* and *Decolonizing the Church*, have been created to engage and inform churches.

**AMENDED  
BYLAWS  
OF  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST BOARD  
Adopted**

**Recitals**

- The United Church of Christ Board is an Ohio nonprofit corporation.
- The Corporation is a successor to and continues the work of The Executive Council of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ, a predecessor body organized under the laws of the State of Ohio, and the Office of General Ministries (A Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ) (including its predecessor offices and bodies: President, Secretary, and Director of Finance and Treasurer of the United Church of Christ; Commission on Development; Stewardship Council; Office of Communication; and ministries of research formerly conducted by the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries), a predecessor body organized under the laws of the State of Ohio. The work of these predecessor bodies, offices and ministries is described in Article Third of the Articles of Incorporation of the Corporation, which Article is attached to these Bylaws as Appendix A.
- In connection with the reorganization of the National Setting of the United Church of Christ, culminating in the actions of the General Synod in July, 2013, the Corporation merged, effective July 25, 2013, with The Executive Council of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ, an Ohio corporation, and the Office of General Ministries (A Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ), an Ohio corporation, and the Corporation is the surviving corporation of the merger.
- The members of the Corporation and the Board of Directors unanimously approved the terms and conditions of the Bylaws of the Corporation from and after the date of said merger.

**ARTICLE I: NAME**

The name of the Corporation is United Church of Christ Board.

**ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP**

- A. The Corporation shall consist of up to 52 members, consisting of 36 members serving in at-large positions and up to 16 members serving as ex-officio members with voice and vote. The composition of the membership of the Corporation shall embody the commitment of the United Church of Christ to be a diverse, equitable, and inclusive Church open and accessible to all, reflecting the racial and ethnic

47 diversity of society with a balance of leadership between women and men among  
48 people of diverse races, ethnicities, genders, gender expressions, and sexuality. All  
49 members of the Corporation shall be voting members, except as legally  
50 proscribed and noted below.

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52 The 36 at-large members, nominated by the General Synod Nominating  
53 Committee, and elected by the General Synod as members of the Corporation shall  
54 reflect the following composition at the time of their election:

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- 56 • A majority shall be persons of color.
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- 58 • A majority shall be persons who identify as women, both transgender and  
59 cisgender; non-binary persons; or gender non-conforming persons. The remaining  
60 members may be persons who identify as men, both transgender and cisgender.
- 61 • One-third shall be authorized ministers or persons with Ordained Ministerial  
62 Partner Standing.
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- 64 • Two-thirds shall be laypersons.
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- 66 • Twenty percent shall be under 30 years of age. To the extent possible, the under  
67 30 years of age members shall include both youth of high school age and young  
68 adults. All such members shall be voting members except as legally proscribed.
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- 70 • At least one member shall be a person who self-identifies as having a disability.
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- 72 • At least one member shall be a person who self-identifies as gay, lesbian, bisexual,  
73 or asexual. At least one member shall be a person who self-identifies as or  
74 transgender, non-binary, or gender non-conforming.

75 At-large members shall serve one term of three regular meetings of the General  
76 Synod, which shall commence at the close of the General Synod meeting at which  
77 the person is elected and qualified and shall terminate at the close of the General  
78 Synod meeting in which a successor is elected and qualified. At-large members  
79 shall be divided into three classes of 12 members each, with a class of 12 members  
80 being elected at each General Synod. No at-large member who has served more  
81 than one-half of a full term shall be nominated to serve again until at least one  
82 regular meeting of the General Synod has elapsed. Nominations for the at-large  
83 positions shall be solicited from all entities and organizations within the United  
84 Church of Christ. There shall not be more than three at-large members from any  
85 one Conference at the time of an individual's election.

86 Notwithstanding the previous provision, the terms of at-large members elected at  
87 meetings of the General Synod from 2019 to 2031 shall be governed by the  
88 Transitional UCCB Member Terms Chart in Appendix A to these Bylaws, to  
89 account for a time of transition as the General Synod term changes from two years

90 to three years.

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92 The General Synod Nominating Committee nominates these persons after  
93 submission of names, according to the procedures established in the Bylaws of the  
94 United Church of Christ, and criteria determined by the Nominating Committee.  
95 In order to fulfill its responsibilities to ensure that the membership of the  
96 Corporation reflects the diversity to which the United Church of Christ is  
97 committed, the Nominating Committee may ask for additional names to be  
98 submitted.

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100 Appointed members of the Corporation with voice and vote, affirmed by vote of  
101 the General Synod, include:

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- 103 1. The Officers of the United Church of Christ.
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- 105 2. The Moderator and the Assistant Moderator of the General Synod.
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- 107 3. One member designated by the Christian Church (Disciples of
- 108 Christ) to serve a term of two years. Any such member shall be
- 109 eligible to serve up to two additional terms and not to exceed three
- 110 terms.
- 111 4. Six principal ministers of Conferences, one to be elected from each
- 112 Region by the Council of Conference Ministers for a term of one
- 113 General Synod term, not to exceed two consecutive terms. If any
- 114 such member ceases during the member's term of office with the
- 115 Corporation to be the principal minister of a Conference within the
- 116 Region from which said member was elected, a vacancy shall be
- 117 thereby created to be filled by election by the Council of
- 118 Conference Ministers.
- 119 5. The Executive of the United Church Funds, Inc.
- 120 6. The Executive of The Pension Boards-United Church of Christ.
- 121 7. The Executive of the Council for Health and Human Service
- 122 Ministries.
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124 Although members of the Corporation may be nominated or selected by particular  
125 groups, each member serves on behalf of, and bears responsibility for, the well-  
126 being of the whole Church.

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128 B. Vacancies in the membership shall be filled temporarily by the Board of Directors  
129 of the Corporation.

- 131 C. At all meetings of the members, a majority of the members shall constitute a  
132 quorum. The affirmative vote of a majority of the members present at a meeting at  
133 which a quorum is present shall be necessary for the authorization or taking of any  
134 action voted upon by the members, but no action required by law, the Articles of  
135 the Corporation, these Bylaws, or the Corporation's Standing Rules to be  
136 authorized or taken by a specified proportion or number of the members may be  
137 authorized or taken by a lesser proportion or number.  
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- 139 D. An annual meeting of the members shall be held at such time and place as  
140 determined by the Board of Directors. The members shall hold at least one other  
141 regular meeting each year at such time and place as determined by the Board of  
142 Directors. Special meetings of the members may be called by the Chairperson of  
143 the Board of the Directors; or in the case of the Chairperson's absence, death or  
144 disability, the Vice-Chairperson of the Board of Directors; the President; by the  
145 directors by action at a meeting; or a majority of the directors acting without a  
146 meeting, or twenty-five percent of the members. Calls for special meetings shall  
147 specify the purposes thereof. No business other than that specified in the call shall  
148 be considered at any special meeting.  
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- 150 E. Unless waived, written notice of each annual or special meeting stating the date,  
151 time, place and, in the case of a special meeting, purposes thereof shall be given by  
152 personal delivery or by mail to each member not less than ten or more than sixty  
153 days before the date of the meeting.  
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- 155 F. The members of the Corporation shall also be the directors of the Corporation.  
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157 **ARTICLE III: OFFICERS**  
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- 159 A. The officers of the Corporation shall be the following:  
160
- 161 1. Chairperson of the Board of Directors, who shall be elected by the Board  
162 of Directors, in accordance with the Corporation's Standing Rules, from  
163 among the members of the Corporation elected by the General Synod;  
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  - 165 2. Vice-Chairperson of the Board of Directors, who shall be elected by the  
166 Board of Directors, in accordance with the Corporation's Standing Rules,  
167 from among the members of the Corporation elected by the General Synod;  
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  - 169 3. President, who shall be the person occupying the office of General Minister  
170 and President of the United Church of Christ;  
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4. Secretary, who shall be appointed by the Board of Directors, shall not be a member of the United Church of Christ Board, and shall have voice but no vote. The Secretary may be appointed from staff members at the National Setting, who shall report to the General Minister and President, who is directly accountable to the Board of Directors; and
  6. Treasurer, who shall be appointed by the Board of Directors, shall not be a member of the United Church of Christ Board, and shall have voice but no vote. The Treasurer may be appointed from staff members at the National Setting, who shall report to the General Minister and President, who is directly accountable to the Board of Directors.

184 The Board of Directors may also elect such additional officers as it deems desirable. Any  
185 officer elected by the Board may be removed by the Board, with or without cause. Any two  
186 or more offices, except those of President and Secretary, may be held by the same person.  
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188 B. Powers and Duties of Officers:  
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1. Chairperson. The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the members and the Board of Directors and shall have such other powers and duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors. Except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, the Corporation's Standing Rules or the Constitution or Bylaws of the United Church of Christ, the Chairperson shall have the authority to appoint the members and the chairpersons and the vice-chairpersons of the Ministry Committees, Standing Committees, any Ad Hoc or Special Committees and all other committees or advisory panels created to recommend to the Corporation.
  2. Vice-Chairperson. In the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the members and the Board of Directors and shall have such other powers and duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors.
  3. President. The President shall be the chief executive officer of the Corporation and shall exercise supervision over the business of the Corporation. The President shall have authority to sign all deeds, mortgages, bonds, agreements, notes, and other instruments requiring the President's signature, and shall have such other powers and duties as the Board of Directors may from time to time assign to the President.
  4. Secretary. The Secretary shall keep minutes of all proceedings of the members and the directors and shall make proper record of the same; shall have authority to execute and deliver certificates as to any of such proceedings and any other records of the Corporation; shall have authority to sign all deeds, mortgages, bonds, agreements, notes and other instruments to be executed by the Corporation which require the

218 Secretary's signature; shall give notice of meetings of members and  
219 directors; shall keep such books and records as may be required by law or  
220 the Board of Directors; and, in general, shall possess all powers and  
221 perform all duties incident to the office of Secretary and such other powers  
222 and duties as may from time to time be assigned to the Secretary by the  
223 Board of Directors or the President.

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225 5. Treasurer. The Treasurer shall have general supervision of all finances;  
226 shall receive and have in charge all money, bills, notes, deeds, leases,  
227 mortgages and similar property belonging to the Corporation; shall do with  
228 the same as may from time to time be required by the Board of Directors;  
229 and shall have such other powers and duties as may from time to time be  
230 assigned to the Treasurer by the Board of Directors or the President.

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232 The Board of Directors may appoint such assistant and subordinate officers as it may deem  
233 desirable. Each such officer shall possess such powers and perform such duties as the Board  
234 of Directors or the President may prescribe. In the absence of any officer of the  
235 Corporation, or for any other reason the Board of Directors may deem sufficient, the Board  
236 of Directors may delegate, for the time being, the powers or duties, or any of them, of an  
237 officer to any other officer or to any director.

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239 **ARTICLE IV: BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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241 A. The members of the Corporation shall be the directors of the Corporation.  
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243 B. Meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held in accordance with Article II,  
244 Paragraphs C, D, and E. The Board of Directors shall make such elections,  
245 nominations or appointments as the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ or action  
246 of the General Synod may require.  
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248 C. The Board of Directors shall have the following Committees:

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250 1. Ministry Committees.

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252 The Board of Directors shall establish committees relating to the mission  
253 and ministry of the United Church of Christ (the Ministry Committees).  
254 Each Ministry Committee shall make recommendations to the Board of  
255 Directors regarding ministry priorities and policy. The Ministry  
256 Committees will honor the diversity of commitments of the United Church  
257 of Christ and work in covenant with each other and National Setting staff.  
258 To the extent possible while still maintaining expertise needed on the  
259 Ministry Committees, the composition of each Ministry Committee shall  
260 embody the commitment of the United Church of Christ to a multicultural  
261 and multiracial Church, with leadership reflecting race and gender diversity,  
262 open and accessible to all. To the extent possible while still maintaining  
263 expertise needed on the Ministry Committees, each Director will be



264 assigned to a Ministry Committee based on that individual's experience,  
265 expertise, personal passion and spiritual calling. Individuals also will be  
266 considered based on the role that they may serve as members of the  
267 Common Global Ministries Board, the mission partnership between the  
268 United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).  
269 Each Ministry Committee will elect a chairperson and a vice-chairperson,  
270 subject to the requirement that at least one of these positions must be held  
271 by a person of color in each Ministry Committee.  
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273 2. Executive Committee.  
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275 a. This Committee shall consist of up to 16 members of the  
276 Corporation as follows:

277  
278 (i) Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Board of  
279 Directors;

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281 (ii) Chairperson of the Audit Committee, Finance and Budget  
282 Committee, Governance Committee, Investment and  
283 Endowment Committee, and Development Committee;

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285 (iii) The Officers of the United Church of Christ;

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287 (iv) One Conference Minister;

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289 (v) Moderator of the General Synod; and

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291 (vi) Three additional at-large members, one from each of the  
292 three classes.  
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294 b. To the extent possible while still maintaining diversity and  
295 expertise, the composition of the Executive Committee shall  
296 embody the commitment of the United Church of Christ to a  
297 multicultural and multiracial Church, with membership reflecting  
298 age, race, and gender diversity, open and accessible to all.  
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300 c. This Committee shall have the responsibility to ensure that visioning  
301 and strategic planning be done on behalf of the National Setting of  
302 the Church. It will lead the Board of Directors in developing and  
303 articulating comprehensive and integrated strategies and goals for  
304 the National Setting. It will facilitate the Board of Director's  
305 identification of concerns and ideas related to communications,  
306 identity, fundraising, fund development, strategic planning,  
307 evangelism, and other critical issues for the life of the whole Church.  
308 The decision-making power and authority of this Committee shall  
309 be governed by the Standing Rules of the Corporation.

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- d. This Committee is authorized and directed to take, during the intervals between meetings of the Board of Directors, all actions that the Board of Directors is authorized to take on behalf of the Corporation, except actions for the following purposes:
    - (i) To amend or repeal the Corporation’s Articles of Incorporation, these Bylaws, or Standing Rules;
    - (ii) To sell or otherwise dispose of assets of the Corporation other than in the ordinary course of business;
    - (iii) To dissolve or merge the Corporation;
    - (iv) To act as the General Synod of the United Church of Christ ad interim; or
    - (iv) To act on any matter on which action can be delayed until a meeting of the Board of Directors without causing harm or prejudice to the Corporation because of the delay.
  - e. Meetings of this Committee shall be called by the Chairperson of the Board of Directors or the President.
3. Finance and Budget Committee.
- a. This Committee shall consist of up to 12 members of the Corporation, including:
    - (i) Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson of the Board of Directors;
    - (ii) Six representatives of the Board of Directors; and
    - (iii) President of the Corporation.
  - b. The duties and responsibilities of this Committee include:
    - (i) Reviewing the annual available resources and being responsible for financial planning;
    - (ii) Reviewing the proposed Annual Budget recommended by the General Minister and President in consultation with the Treasurer and other key staff and mission partners, such as Common Global Ministries;
    - (iii) Recommending the Annual Budget to the Corporation; and

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(iv) Receiving and reviewing regular financial reports.

4. Investment and Endowment Committee.

a. This Committee shall consist of up to 14 members and shall be members of the Corporation (except as noted below), including:

- (i) Six representatives from the Board of Directors;
- (ii) The Officers of the United Church of Christ;
- (iii) The Executive of the United Church Funds, Inc., with voice but without vote; and
- (iv) The Board of Directors, by vote, may add up to three individuals with legal and/or investment expertise who are not members of the Board but are members of the United Church of Christ.

b. The duties and responsibilities of this Committee include:

- (i) Assuring that the legacy/historic restrictions on the use of restricted funds and the intended use restrictions of the unrestricted funds of each of the historic ministries are monitored, accounted for, maintained and reported to the Board of Directors annually. This Committee shall monitor and oversee the allocation of both restricted and unrestricted funds to ensure that they will be allocated based on donor intent, whenever that can be determined and to provide the Board of Directors an overview of all funds in order to encourage the most effective collaborative and holistic use of those funds to meet the missional needs of the Church.
- (ii) Recommending to the Board of Directors investment policies including investment screens that reflect the commitment of the United Church of Christ to corporate social responsibility.
- (iii) Managing the investment of the endowed funds and other assets including real property in accordance with investment policies approved by the Board of Directors.
- (iv) Monitoring and reporting on the management of invested funds to the Board of Directors.

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- (v) Recommending to the Board of Directors the annual draw rate on invested funds that may be used to carry out the mission entrusted to the Covenanted Ministries. Recommendations as to the annual draw rate and as to the allocation of the annual dollar amounts resulting from the application of the annual draw rate to each of the restricted endowment funds and to each of the historic donor intended uses of each of the unrestricted endowment funds shall be accepted by the Board of Directors unless modified by a vote of two-thirds of the members present of the full Board.
- (vi) Reviewing, monitoring and recommending to the Board of Directors the allocation of the annual dollar amounts resulting from the application of the spending rate to each of the restricted endowment funds and to each of the historic donor intended uses of each of the unrestricted endowment funds.
- (vii) Providing Board representation to the Investment Committee of the United Church Funds, Inc.

5. Audit Committee.

- a. This Committee shall consist of such members as determined by the Board of Directors, provided that members of the Board of Directors must comprise a majority of the members of this Committee. The Board of Directors, by vote, may include individuals with legal and/or financial expertise who are not members of the Board but are members of the United Church of Christ. All members of this Committee shall be voting members.
- b. The duties and responsibilities of this Committee include:
  - (i) Retaining the audit firm to perform the annual financial audit;
  - (ii) Receiving and reviewing the audit report from the auditors and reporting to the Board; and
  - (iii) Such other duties as assigned by the Board of Directors.

D. In addition to the foregoing Committees, the Board of Directors may provide for such other standing or special committees as it deems appropriate and discontinue the same at its pleasure, and each such committee may draw on expertise beyond the Board of Directors if necessary.

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The chairperson and vice-chairperson of each Committee shall be appointed by the Chairperson of the Board of Directors, except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, the Corporation’s Standing Rules or the Constitution or Bylaws of the United Church of Christ. A majority of the whole authorized number of members of each Committee is necessary to constitute a quorum for a meeting of such Committee. The act of a majority of the members of each Committee present at any meeting at which a quorum is present is the act of such Committee, but no action required by law, the Articles of the Corporation, these Bylaws, or the Corporation’s Standing Rules to be authorized or taken by a specified proportion or number of the members may be authorized or taken by a lesser proportion or number.

- E. Board Committees shall keep full records and accounts of their proceedings. Vacancies in Board Committees shall be filled by the Chairperson of the Board.
- F. Except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, meetings of each Committee shall be called by the chairperson of the Committee. Written notice of the time and place of each meeting of each Committee, and of the purpose or purposes for which the meeting is called, shall be given to each member of the Committee either by personal delivery or by mail at least two days before the meeting. A copy of the minutes of each meeting of each Committee shall be mailed to each member of the Board of Directors within fourteen days after the date of such meeting.
- G. The Board of Directors may provide for special advisory commissions on subjects of pervasive interest to the entire United Church of Christ on which the Corporation and/or General Minister and President need policy or substantive advice. Members of such commissions and its chairperson shall be appointed by the Board of Directors and shall include at least one director of the Corporation. The chairperson of each commission shall be designated by the Chairperson of the Board of Directors.
- H. The Board of Directors shall adopt such Standing Rules to govern and regulate the Corporation as the Board deems appropriate.

482 **ARTICLE V: INDEMNIFICATION**

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- A. Authorization.
  - 1. In the event that any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed civil, criminal, administrative or investigative action, suit or proceeding, other than an action by or in the right of the Corporation, seeks indemnification from the Corporation against expenses (including attorneys’ fees), judgments, fines and amounts paid in settlement, actually and reasonably incurred by such person in connection with such action, suit or proceeding by reason of the fact that such person is or was a director, officer, employee, agent or volunteer of the Corporation, or is or was serving at the request of the Corporation as a director, officer, employee, member, manager, agent or volunteer of another corporation (domestic or foreign, nonprofit, or for profit), limited liability company, partnership, joint venture, trust, or other enterprise, then, unless such indemnification is ordered by a court, the Corporation shall determine or cause to be determined in the manner provided in Section 1702.12(E)(4) of the Ohio Revised Code whether or not indemnification is proper in the circumstances because the person claiming such indemnification has met the applicable standards of conduct set forth in divisions (E)(1) and (E)(2) of Section 1702.12 of the Ohio Revised Code and, to the extent that it is so determined that such indemnification is proper, the person claiming such indemnification shall be indemnified.
  - 2. Expenses, including attorneys’ fees, incurred by a director, officer, employee, member, manager, agent or volunteer in defending any action, suit or proceeding referred to in this Paragraph A may be paid by the Corporation as they are incurred in advance of the final disposition of such action, suit or proceeding, as authorized by the directors in the specific case upon receipt of an undertaking by or on behalf of the director, officer, employee, member, manager, agent or volunteer to repay such amount if it ultimately is determined that such person is not entitled to be indemnified by the Corporation as authorized in this Paragraph.
  - 3. The indemnification authorized by this Paragraph A shall not be deemed exclusive of, and shall be in addition to, any other rights granted to those seeking indemnification, pursuant to the Articles of Incorporation of the Corporation, these Bylaws, any agreement, vote of members or disinterested directors, or otherwise, both as to action in their official capacities and as to action in another capacity while holding their offices or positions, and shall continue as to a person who has ceased to be a director, officer, employee, member, manager, agent or volunteer and shall inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors, and administrators of such a person.
  - 4. For purposes of this Article, the term “volunteer” is used as defined by Chapter 1702 of the Ohio Revised Code, as amended.
  - 5. The provisions of Section 1702.12(E)(5)(a)(i) of the Ohio Revised Code applicable to automatic advance payment of expenses shall not apply to the Corporation.

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B. Insurance.

The Corporation, to the extent permitted by Chapter 1702 of the Revised Code of Ohio, may purchase and maintain insurance or furnish similar protection including, but not limited to, trust funds, letters of credit or self-insurance for or on behalf of any person who is or was a director, officer, employee, agent or volunteer of the Corporation, or is or was serving at the request of the Corporation as a director, officer, employee, member, manager, agent or volunteer of another corporation (domestic or foreign, nonprofit, or for profit), limited liability company, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise.

C. Limitation.

Anything to the contrary notwithstanding, the Corporation shall not indemnify directors or officers or other persons or entities, pay their expenses in advance or pay insurance premiums on their behalf if such indemnification payment, advance expense payment or payment of insurance premium would constitute a violation of any provision of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, applicable to the Corporation.

**ARTICLE VI: FISCAL YEAR**

The fiscal year of the Corporation shall be the twelve (12) month period ending on the last day of December.

**ARTICLE VII: RECORD OF MEMBERS AND DIRECTORS**

The Secretary of the Corporation shall keep or cause to be kept a book, which may be included in and be a part of the book containing the minutes of meetings of members and of directors, in which shall be written in ink, or typed, the names of all members and directors, together with the last known address of each member and director. There shall also be stated therein the date upon which each member or director became such, and upon the termination of any membership or directorship for any cause, the facts relating thereto shall be recorded in said book together with the date of such termination. It shall be the duty of every member and director, upon becoming such, to furnish forthwith to the Secretary of the Corporation, for inclusion in such record, the member's then address, and likewise to report promptly to the Secretary for inclusion in such record any change in any such address.

**ARTICLE VIII: AMENDMENTS**

A. These Bylaws may be amended by a 2/3 vote of the entire membership of the Board of Directors, provided that proposed changes or amendments shall have been submitted in writing to the entire membership of the Board of Directors at least ten days prior to the date of the meeting.

- 572 B. Members may vote on changes or amendments either in person or in such other  
 573 manner as established by the Board of Directors and in accordance with the laws of  
 574 the State of Ohio.  
 575  
 576 C. The Secretary of the Corporation is authorized to make editorial changes in these  
 577 Bylaws whenever necessary, after consultation with legal counsel for the  
 578 Corporation.  
 579  
 580

581 APPENDIX A

582 **Transitional United Church of Christ Board Terms**

583

General Synod Year Board Composition	Board Class		
	Year of Election		
	Number of At-Large Members		
2023	Class of 2025	Class of 2027/2028*	Class of 2031**
	Elected in 2019	Elected in 2021	Elected in 2023
	12	12	12
2025	Class of 2027/2028	Class of 2031	Class of 2034
	Elected in 2021	Elected in 2023	Elected in 2025
	12	12	12
2028	Class of 2031	Class of 2034	Class of 2037
	Elected in 2023	Elected in 2025	Elected in 2028
	12	12	12
2031	Class of 2034	Class of 2037	Class of 2040
	Elected in 2025	Elected in 2028	Elected in 2031
	12	12	12

586  
 587 \* The class of 2027, elected in 2021, will become the class of 2028 following the bylaws  
 588 amendment, and serve a seven-year term. It will serve GS terms 2021-2023, 2023-2025, and  
 589 2025-2028.  
 590

591 \*\* The class of 2031, elected in 2023, serves an eight-year UCCB term, consisting of the  
 592 following GS terms: 2023-2025, 2025-2028, and 2028-2031.



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**APPENDIX B**  
**AMENDED AND RESTATED**  
**ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION**  
**OF**  
**UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST BOARD**  
**Adopted**

9 These Amended and Restated Articles supersede the previous Articles.

10  
11 **FIRST:** The name of the corporation shall be the United Church of Christ Board.

12 **SECOND:** The place in the State of Ohio where the principal office of the  
13 corporation is to be located is the City of Cleveland in the County of Cuyahoga.

14 **THIRD:** The corporation is organized exclusively for religious and charitable purposes.

15 As such,

16 A. it continues the work, mandates and legacies of The Executive Council of the General  
17 Synod of the United Church of Christ, a predecessor body organized under the laws of the State  
18 of Ohio with the following purposes:

19 To receive, manage, hold and dispose of any property, real and personal, of  
20 the General Synod of the United Church of Christ and all property, real and  
21 personal, which may be conveyed or transferred to the General Synod, in  
22 trust or otherwise; to act for the General Synod between meetings of the  
23 General Synod in carrying on the work of the United Church of Christ; and  
24 to do and promote religious work for the advancement of the general  
25 interests and purposes of the General Synod.

26  
27 B. it continues the work, mandates and legacies of the Office of General Ministries (A  
28 Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ) (including its predecessor offices and  
29 bodies: President, Secretary, and Director of Finance and Treasurer of the United Church of  
30 Christ; Commission on Development; Stewardship Council; Office of Communication; and  
31 ministries of research formerly conducted by the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries),  
32 a predecessor body organized under the laws of the State of Ohio with the following purposes:

33 To care for the spiritual life, unity, and well-being of the United Church of Christ;  
34 nurture its covenantal life, and its ecumenical and interfaith relationships; provide  
35 regular processes which focus on theological reflection throughout the Church;  
36 and facilitate the visioning, planning, coordination, and implementation of the  
37 total mission of the United Church of Christ.  
38

39 C. it shall act for the General Synod of the United Church of Christ ad interim, and, in  
40 cooperation with the Officers of the United Church of Christ, shall provide coordination and  
41 evaluation of the work of the Church and shall carry out such other responsibilities as may be  
42 from time to time delegated to it by the General Synod, or as provided for in the Constitution or  
43 Bylaws of the United Church of Christ. In all its work, it shall be guided by the policies  
44 established by the General Synod.

45 It shall be responsible for strategic planning and policymaking. Its Committees shall make  
46 recommendations to its members for strategic planning, policymaking and oversight purposes. It  
47 shall receive recommendations from its Investment and Endowment Committee regarding the  
48 annual draw rate on invested funds that may be used to carry out the mission entrusted to the  
49 Covenanted Ministries. Recommendations as to the annual draw rate and as to the allocation of  
50 the annual dollar amounts resulting from the application of the annual draw rate to each of the  
51 restricted endowment funds and to each of the historic donor intended uses of each of the  
52 unrestricted endowment funds shall not be modified by the Board except upon a two-thirds vote  
53 of the members present of the full Board.

54 It shall further be responsible for policies relating to the mission of the United Church of  
55 Christ in its National Setting. It shall be responsible, with the General Minister and President,  
56 for the ecumenical and interfaith relationships of the United Church of Christ in the National  
57 Setting. It shall support the on-going work of the General Synod through its various  
58 ministries, planning for and encouraging cooperation among those ministries, with Local

59 Churches, Associations, and Conferences of the United Church of Christ, and with other  
60 expressions of the Church which contribute to and embody God's mission in Jesus Christ.  
61 It shall support the spiritual and financial health of the Church, and shall ensure the presence  
62 and implementation of policies which contribute to the health of the Covenanted Ministries  
63 in relationship with one another and their accountability to the General Synod. It shall  
64 receive reports from the Officers of the United Church of Christ and provide oversight and  
65 support for the work of that body. It shall facilitate the business of the General Synod and  
66 assume such other tasks as may be assigned to it by the General Synod. It shall be a focal  
67 point for decision-making, overall planning and evaluation, and budgeting in the National  
68 Setting. It shall receive and report upon divergent points of view and maintain an open channel  
69 for the consideration of minority or dissenting opinion. It shall submit a report of its work  
70 to the General Synod at each regular meeting. In cooperation with the Covenanted,  
71 Affiliated, and Associated Ministries of the United Church of Christ, it shall make an annual  
72 informational report to the Local Churches and the Conferences of the United Church of  
73 Christ about the total program of the Church in the National Setting.

74 D. it shall fill temporarily vacancies occurring in offices, commissions or  
75 committees of the General Synod, or in its membership in accordance with the Constitution  
76 and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ.

77 E. it shall make such elections, nominations or appointments as the Bylaws of the  
78 United Church of Christ or action of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ may  
79 require.

80 F. acting as the Budget Committee for the General Synod of the United Church of  
81 Christ, it shall determine the allocation of funds from Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM). It,

82 acting as the Budget Committee, shall also receive and review the past and projected use of  
83 OCWM funds allocated to each Covenanted Ministry and recommend the OCWM threshold  
84 amount for the biennium.

85 G. it shall serve as the Business Committee of the General Synod during its sessions,  
86 and as such shall prepare the agenda and schedule for all meetings of the General Synod,  
87 recommend changes therein during sessions, and appoint committees not otherwise provided.

88 **FOURTH:** The corporation's bylaws and rules for its government and the management  
89 of its affairs must be consistent with these Articles and the Constitution, Bylaws, Rules and  
90 regulations of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ. The corporation may exercise  
91 its powers for the use and benefit of any other body of Christians which has heretofore united or  
92 may hereafter unite with the United Church of Christ by union, merger, affiliation or otherwise.

93 The corporation shall have the power to take over, carry on and conduct the work or  
94 any part of the work heretofore carried on by The Executive Council of the General Synod of the  
95 United Church of Christ, a predecessor body organized under the laws of the State of Ohio; the  
96 Office of General Ministries (A Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ) (including  
97 its predecessor offices and bodies: President, Secretary, and Director of Finance and Treasurer of  
98 the United Church of Christ; Commission on Development; Stewardship Council; Office of  
99 Communication; and ministries of research formerly conducted by the United Church Board for  
100 Homeland Ministries), a predecessor body organized under the laws of the State of Ohio; and the  
101 corporation may take over, acquire and become possessed of and invested with all or any part of  
102 the property and assets now owned, possessed, held and/or administered by said Executive Council  
103 and/or the Office of General Ministries, expressly subject as to all said property and assets of  
104 said bodies, offices and ministries, and each of them, and as to each and every part of said property

105 and assets, to all and every of the terms, conditions, stipulations, restrictions, reservations and  
106 provisions, of any and all wills, trusts, gifts, grants and contracts relating to or in any way  
107 affecting the property and assets, so far as the same are now, or may become subject to or affected  
108 thereby, which shall be strictly and completely observed, fulfilled, discharged and complied  
109 with by the corporation hereby created, when and after, and from time to time as, it shall have duly  
110 acquired and become possessed of said property and assets. Notwithstanding such  
111 conveyances and transfers to the corporation hereby created all and singular the obligations of  
112 said bodies, offices and ministries so conveying their property shall remain in full force and the  
113 corporation hereby created shall be liable upon all contracts made by each of said conveying  
114 bodies, offices and ministries to the extent of the value of the property applicable to the discharge  
115 of its obligations, received from such conveying body, office or ministry.

116         The corporation is hereby authorized to accept and receive the assignment, transfer,  
117 conveyance, setting over and delivery of all or any portion of the property, estates and rights of  
118 any and every description held or enjoyed or which may hereafter be held or enjoyed by said  
119 Executive Council and/or the Office of General Ministries (including its predecessor offices and  
120 bodies: President, Secretary, and Director of Finance and Treasurer of the United Church of Christ;  
121 Commission on Development; Stewardship Council; Office of Communication; and ministries of  
122 research formerly conducted by the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries), or any of said  
123 bodies, offices and ministries, or to which they now are or any of them now is, or they or any  
124 of them may hereafter become entitled, by virtue of any grant, gift, bequest or devise or otherwise,  
125 howsoever, and in respect of any and all said property, estates and rights if and when, and from  
126 time to time as, the same are assigned, transferred, conveyed, set over and delivered to it by  
127 said bodies, offices and ministries respectively, shall have, hold, use and enjoy the same corporate

128 powers, franchises, and privileges as those which in respect thereof are now held, used and enjoyed  
129 by said bodies, offices and ministries respectively; and the corporation hereby created shall  
130 have, hold, use and enjoy all the property, estates and rights which may be so assigned, transferred,  
131 conveyed, set over and delivered by said bodies, offices and ministries respectively in the same  
132 manner and to the same extent as said bodies, offices and ministries by which the same may  
133 be so assigned, transferred, conveyed, set over and delivered to it might respectively have  
134 done, and shall be entitled to receive, sue for and recover all legacies, devises, bequests, gifts  
135 and property which have heretofore been or may hereafter be made or given to said bodies,  
136 offices and ministries, or any of them if and when, and from time to time as, the same are by  
137 them respectively so assigned, transferred, conveyed, set over and delivered, provided, the  
138 corporation hereby created shall receive and hold said property, estates and rights, legacies,  
139 devises, bequests and gifts, upon the same respective trusts, and for the same respective uses and  
140 purposes only, as the same are or otherwise would be held by the respective bodies, offices and  
141 ministries by which the same may be so assigned, transferred, conveyed, set over and delivered  
142 to it.

143         In addition to the properties and assets of said bodies, offices and ministries  
144 mentioned in preceding paragraphs of this FOURTH Article, which the corporation hereby  
145 created is authorized to acquire, become possessed of and administer, the corporation hereby  
146 created shall have authority to take, receive, accept, purchase or otherwise acquire, hold,  
147 properly administer and dispose of property, real or personal, of any kind, which, at any  
148 time and from time to time, may be given, devised, bequeathed, conveyed, sold, transferred,  
149 assigned, set over or delivered to it in connection with, or for, or in furtherance of, the  
150 purposes and objects to be served and accomplished by its creation or any of them, in so far

151 as the same may be properly asserted and exercised by it and may not be inconsistent with  
152 the constitution and laws of this State, and in accordance with the terms, conditions,  
153 stipulations, restrictions, reservations and provisions of any will, trust, gift, grant or  
154 contract, relating to or affecting any of the properties, real or personal, of which it may  
155 become possessed.

156 **FIFTH:** No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of any  
157 member, director, officer, or other private person or be devoted to any purposes other than  
158 those specified in the THIRD Article hereof, excepting, however, payment of reasonable  
159 compensation for services rendered.

160 No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be to carry on propaganda  
161 or otherwise to attempt to influence legislation, and the corporation shall not participate in or  
162 intervene in (including the publishing or distributing of statements) any political campaign on  
163 behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office.

164 The corporation shall not discriminate against any person by refusing its services to  
165 such person on the grounds of race, color, sex, age, sexual orientation, religion, national  
166 origin or disability.

167 Notwithstanding any other provision of these Articles, the corporation shall not carry  
168 on any activity not permitted to be carried on (i) by a corporation exempt from federal  
169 income tax under §501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (or the  
170 corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue law), or (ii) by a  
171 corporation, contributions to which are deductible under §170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue  
172 Code of 1986, as amended (or the corresponding provision of any future United States  
173 Internal Revenue law).

174           **SIXTH:** The corporation shall consist of up to 52 members. Thirty-six members shall  
175 serve in at-large positions and up to sixteen 16 members shall be appointed members with voice  
176 and vote. The composition of the membership of the corporation shall embody the commitment  
177 of the United Church of Christ to be a diverse, equitable, and inclusive Church open and accessible  
178 to all, reflecting a balance of leadership among people of diverse races, ethnicities, genders,  
179 gender expressions, and sexuality. All members of the corporation shall be voting members,  
180 except as legally proscribed and noted below.

181           The 36 at-large members, nominated by the General Synod Nominating Committee, and  
182 elected by the General Synod as members of the corporation shall reflect the following  
183 composition:

- 184           • A majority shall be persons of color.
- 185           • A majority shall be persons who identify as women, both transgender and cisgender;  
186 non-binary persons; or gender non-conforming persons. The remaining members may  
187 be persons who identify as men, both transgender and cisgender.
- 188           • One-third shall be authorized ministers or persons with Ordained Ministerial Partner  
189 Standing.
- 190           • Two-thirds shall be laypersons.
- 191           • Twenty percent shall be under 30 years of age. To the extent possible, the under 30  
192 years of age members shall include both youth of high school age and young adults.  
193 All such members shall be voting members except as legally proscribed.
- 194           • At least one member shall be a person who self-identifies as having a disability.
- 195           • At least one member shall be a person who self-identifies as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or  
196 asexual. At least one member shall be a person who self-identifies as transgender,  
197 non-binary, or gender non-conforming.
- 198           • At least one member shall be a person who self-identifies as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or  
199 asexual. At least one member shall be a person who self-identifies as transgender,  
200 non-binary, or gender non-conforming.
- 201           • At least one member shall be a person who self-identifies as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or  
202 asexual. At least one member shall be a person who self-identifies as transgender,  
203 non-binary, or gender non-conforming.

204           At-large members shall serve one term of three regular meetings of the General Synod,  
which shall commence at the close of the General Synod meeting at which the person is elected  
and qualified and shall terminate at the close of the General Synod meeting in which a successor



205 is elected and qualified. At-large members shall be divided into three classes of 12 members each,  
206 with a class of 12 members being elected at each General Synod. No at-large member who has  
207 served more than one-half of a full term shall be nominated to serve again until at least one regular  
208 meeting of the General Synod has elapsed. Nominations for the at-large positions shall be solicited  
209 from all entities and organizations within the United Church of Christ. There shall not be more  
210 than three at-large members from any one Conference at the time of an individual's election.

211 Notwithstanding the previous provision, the terms of at large-members elected at meetings  
212 of the General Synod from 2019 to 2031 shall be governed by the Transitional UCCB Member  
213 Terms as described in the UCC Bylaws to account for a time of transition as the General Synod  
214 term changes from two years to three years.

215 The General Synod Nominating Committee nominates these persons after submission of  
216 names, according to the procedures established in the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ, and  
217 criteria determined by the Nominating Committee. In order to fulfill its responsibilities to ensure  
218 that the membership of the corporation reflects the diversity to which the United Church of Christ  
219 is committed, the Nominating Committee may ask for additional names to be submitted.

220 Appointed members of the corporation with voice and vote, affirmed by vote of the  
221 General Synod, include:

- 222 (a) The Officers of the United Church of Christ.
- 223 (b) The Moderator and the Assistant Moderator of the General Synod.
- 224 (c) One member designated by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to serve a term  
225 of two years. Any such member shall be eligible to serve up to two additional terms and  
226 not to exceed three terms.
- 227  
228 (d) Six principal ministers of Conferences, one to be elected from each Region by the  
229 Council of Conference Ministers for a term of one General Synod term, not to exceed two  
230 consecutive terms. If any such member ceases during the member's term of office with  
231 the corporation to be the principal minister of a Conference within the Region from which

232 said member was elected, a vacancy shall be thereby created to be filled by election by the  
233 Council of Conference Ministers.

234  
235 (e) The Executive of the United Church Funds, Inc.

236 (f) The Executive of The Pension Boards-United Church of Christ.

237 (g) The Executive of the Council for Health and Human Service Ministries.

238 The members of the corporation shall also be the directors of the corporation.

239 **SEVENTH:** Except as otherwise provided by law, the corporation shall not be  
240 dissolved without the approval of its Board of Directors, after advice and consultation with  
241 the General Synod of the United Church of Christ. In the event of such dissolution, the Board  
242 of Directors shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all liabilities of the  
243 corporation, distribute or convey all of the assets of the corporation to such successor  
244 corporation organized and operated exclusively for religious and charitable purposes as shall  
245 at the time qualify as an exempt organization under §501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code  
246 of 1986, as amended (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal  
247 Revenue law), and as shall be legally obligated and empowered to own and carry out the  
248 obligations, terms, conditions and requirements of the corporation's assets, as the Board of  
249 Directors shall determine. Such successor corporation shall be related to the United Church  
250 of Christ.

251 **EIGHTH:** Notwithstanding any provision of the Ohio Revised Code Sections  
252 1702.01 to 1702.99, inclusive, now or hereafter in force, requiring for the authorization or taking  
253 of any action the vote or consent of all of the members or any other number of the members  
254 greater than a majority, such action, unless otherwise expressly required by law, these Articles,  
255 or the corporation's bylaws, may be authorized or taken by the vote or consent of a majority  
256 of the members.



The following resolution was approved by the delegates at a plenary of the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ, held in Indianapolis June 30-July 4, 2023.

**Living into God’s Economy: Celebrating the 170<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the United Church of Christ Church Building & Loan Fund (CB&LF)**

**A Prudential Resolution**

**Summary**

This Resolution celebrates that since 1853 the United Church of Christ Church Building & Loan Fund has been helping the church live into God’s Economy. The resolution commends the many resources and programs of the United Church of Christ Church Building & Loan Fund to churches, conferences, and religious institutions for the transformation of communities and congregations toward an abundant life for all.

**Biblical, Theological, and Historical Background**

Economy comes from the root word *oikos*, or “household,” which in its fullest sense, encompasses every dimension of family, region, city-state, tribe, land, country, and planet. Therefore, economy (*oikonomia*) literally translated “household rules” has to do with the order and function of everything within these particular household settings. It is from the more universal perspective of *oikonomia* that we consider the idea of *oikonomia tou Theou*, the “Economy of God.” The “Economy of God” is not a new idea, or a concept that we create or construct. God’s economy is an emergent reality that God has been calling forth since the creation event in Genesis and ‘it was good.’ In this current pivotal moment, the future will be decided by the extent to which each local church chooses to live out God’s Economy, *oikonomia tou Theou*, to transform society and create good.<sup>1</sup>

The United Church of Christ Building & Loan Fund is the oldest institution of its kind in the United States, founded in 1853 to support the mission of new and renewing churches. CB&LF helps congregations and institutions in the UCC as well as in other denominations plan, raise, finance, and build transformative projects. For one hundred seventy years, the United Church of Christ Church Building & Loan Fund’s vision has been to transform communities by helping churches live into God’s Economy. The mission of United Church of Christ Church Building & Loan Fund is as relevant as ever.<sup>2</sup>

**Text of Resolution**

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ Church Building & Loan Fund (CB&LF), as the first and one of the nation’s premier faith-focused funds has leveraged its nearly two centuries of church real estate financing to advance the moral imperatives of the Gospel; and

WHEREAS, since CB&LF was founded in 1853, it has provided thousands upon thousands of congregations and other faith-based organizations with real estate financing, operational resources and expertise needed to build stable, thriving communities that live the Gospel mission; and

39 WHEREAS, CB&LF continues to advance God’s Economy through innovative uses of buildings  
40 and space, inventive church operating models, revenue-generating faith enterprises and the use of  
41 impact-driven metrics; and

42  
43 WHEREAS, at the close of 2021, CB&LF had eighty active loans to congregations totaling  
44 \$47,178,505<sup>3</sup>; and

45  
46 WHEREAS, CB&LF builds the capacity of faith leaders and organizations with resources and  
47 training that help promote stabilization, transformation and innovation in churches and  
48 communities; and

49  
50 WHEREAS, CB&LF is raising up and equipping entrepreneurial leadership for missional  
51 community and church connections through the Adese Fellowship program<sup>4</sup>, in partnership with  
52 other ministries of the National Setting of the United Church of Christ; and

53  
54 WHEREAS, CB&LF was foundational in the creation of the UCC Cornerstone Fund, also the  
55 early financial support of Convergence (formerly the Center of Progressive Renewal) and  
56 became a primary investor in Just Like Family Home Care<sup>5</sup>, a home healthcare business  
57 initiative in collaboration with the United Church of Canada; and

58  
59 WHEREAS, CB&LF has advocated for and led the way in investing for impact by becoming in  
60 2013, the first financial ministry in the United Church of Christ to adopt an impact investing  
61 policy<sup>6</sup>, thereby pledging to invest 100% of its endowment for ministry, mission, environmental,  
62 social, or economic justice returns along with financial returns; and

63  
64 WHEREAS, CB&LF since 2014 has on behalf of churches for whom it has consulted on capital  
65 campaigns gifted almost \$200,000 of its fees to ministries and charitable organizations across the  
66 United States including \$77,744 to Our Church’s Wider Mission<sup>7</sup>; and

67  
68 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church  
69 of Christ recognizes with thanksgiving the work and ministry of the United Church of Christ  
70 Church Building & Loan Fund throughout the years and today helping the church live into God’s  
71 economy.

72  
73 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of  
74 Christ encourages all settings of the UCC to view the Award Winning CB&LF documentary  
75 film, “It Takes a Village”<sup>8</sup> that tells the story of how CB&LF worked with St. Peter’s UCC and  
76 its affiliate MOLO Village Community Development Corporation<sup>9</sup> to build the Village @ West  
77 Jefferson, the first new building project in this Louisville community in decades, creating 100  
78 local jobs and bringing the first restaurant, credit union, coffee shop, health care institute, and  
79 day care facility, community around St. Peter’s UCC in Louisville KY.

80  
81 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod commends CB&LF and  
82 its financial, educational, and capacity building programs to churches, conferences, and religious  
83 institutions for the transformation of communities and congregations toward a just world for all.

84

85 BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of  
86 Christ lauds CB&LF’s goal to raise \$100 Million from investors, financial institutions,  
87 philanthropic organizations and others for church real estate development, flexible financing for  
88 church operational capacity, seed funding for transformative ministry initiatives and financing  
89 for creative spiritual ventures, to help churches and Christian organizations to Plan, Raise,  
90 Finance and Build God’s economy<sup>10</sup>.

91

92 Funding: The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance with  
93 the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

94

95 Implementation: The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other  
96 entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

---

<sup>1</sup> As articulated by Rev. Dr. Patrick Garnet Duggan, Executive Director, CB&LF in **Ground Zero in the Economy of God**, 2013

<sup>222</sup> See mission, history, and program of the Church Building & Loan Fund at [CBLFund.org](http://CBLFund.org) including the video ‘An Introduction to the United Church of Christ Church Building & Loan Fund’ at [CBLFund.org/about](http://CBLFund.org/about)

<sup>3</sup> Data comes from CB&LF “2021 Impact Metrics Report”

<sup>4</sup> The Adese (from the Amharic language meaning to renew, pronounced ah-deh-say) Fellowship is a year-long, ecumenical program that engages participants in self-discovery, theological reflection, and business development as they create enterprises that help their communities follow the way of Jesus and live into God's economy. This groundbreaking fellowship maximizes the business acumen and entrepreneurial capacity of participants to launch scalable and sustainable ventures that counter systemic poverty. [CBLFund.org/build](http://CBLFund.org/build)

<sup>5</sup> The Just Like Family Home Care mission is to provide creative, loving, and innovative solutions to private duty home care for our elderly and in-need. The [Just Like Family Home Care Franchise](http://JustLikeFamilyHomeCare.com) has nearly 30 locations across Canada with plans for franchise development in the United States.

<sup>6</sup> “In recognition that 100% Mission-Focused may lead the Fund to choose from a range of investments, the Fund seeks to invest through advisors, intermediaries and/or investment vehicles that will carry out the Fund’s investment goals and objectives in accordance with this definition of impact investments: investments which have a stated ministry, mission and/or social justice (which includes social justice and/or economic justice) and/or environmental return objective in conjunction with a financial return objective.” Church Building & Loan Fund Investment Policy Statement, October 30, 2013

<sup>7</sup> Data comes from CB&LF “2021 Impact Metrics Report”

<sup>8</sup> The CB&LF’s documentary film, "It Takes A Village" won the special Hero Award at the [Better Cities Film Festival](http://BetterCitiesFilmFestival.com) at the UN-HABITAT's World Urban Forum 11 - cities of the future gathering in Katowice, Poland.

<sup>9</sup> “MOLO” means “welcome” in Xhosa (a South African dialect); at MOLO Village, where everyone is welcome to add their own contributions since “it takes a village.” [MOLO](http://MOLO.org)’s vision is to support the growth of healthy, engaged, and productive residents prepared to take their families and their neighborhood on a path to prosperity.

<sup>10</sup> CB&LF Mission Implementation Strategy Plan 2022 – 2024; Strategic Priority 3: Capital Raise & Financing Capacity; Goal 1: Raise up to \$100M for real estate lending, non-real estate financing and operational capacity building to plan, raise, finance and build God’s Economy.

The following resolution was approved by the delegates at a plenary of the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ, held in Indianapolis June 30-July 4, 2023.

**A RESOLUTION URGING PLANNING FOR AND IMPLEMENTING  
ELECTRIFICATION**

**A Resolution of Witness**

1 **TEXT OF THE MOTION**

2

3 WHEREAS the major 2018 report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change told us  
4 that we must reduce carbon emissions 50% by 2030 in order to avoid the most catastrophic  
5 effects of climate change, a widely accepted benchmark; <sup>1</sup> and

6

7 WHEREAS when we fully ground ourselves in God’s word, we understand that this is God’s  
8 earth that scientists are talking about, and the Twenty-Sixth General Synod has recognized that  
9 the earth belongs to God;<sup>2</sup> and

10

11 WHEREAS God’s earth could be catastrophically impacted by the climate change we are  
12 causing and the Twenty-Sixth General Synod has recognized that the earth is affected by climate  
13 change;<sup>3</sup> and

14

15 WHEREAS protecting God’s creation also protects all God’s people by reducing air pollutants  
16 and sickness; <sup>4</sup> and

17

18 WHEREAS, because air pollutants from burning fossil fuels are especially harmful for children,  
19 the elderly, rural and under-resourced communities, and people of color<sup>5</sup> protection measures  
20 must be just and equitably available; and

21

22 WHEREAS God’s word as set out in Genesis, Leviticus, Mark, Mathew, and Luke leave no  
23 doubt about what is required of a steward, to care for God’s land while in our temporary tenancy;  
24 and

25

26 WHEREAS about 40% of the United States’ emissions causing climate change come from the  
27 places we live and the vehicles we drive and those emissions are increasing<sup>6</sup> and

28

29 WHEREAS our electricity is getting cleaner with the addition of very inexpensive wind- and  
30 solar-generated electricity and electricity will continue to get even cleaner as expensive coal-  
31 fired electric generation is retired<sup>7</sup>; and

32

33 WHEREAS the Inflation Reduction Act strongly supports clean electricity with significant  
34 funding and strongly supports and funds electrification, storage, and solar for low and middle  
35 income people,<sup>8</sup> and

36

37 WHEREAS God calls on each of us and all of us together in community to act prophetically, to  
38 be role models, to be the Moses of our time, and

39

40 WHEREAS our church communities can lead the way to protect God’s earth and its people by  
41 electrifying and helping our members and neighbors electrify;

42  
43 **NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that, as one of the ways to protect all of God’s  
44 creation from climate changing emissions, the Thirty-Fourth General Synod encourages United  
45 Church of Christ congregations and individuals to actively plan for and promote electrifying  
46 fossil-fueled space heating and cooling equipment, appliances and machines when old ones fail  
47 or become outdated or replacing outdated or failing electric space heating and cooling  
48 equipment, appliances and machines with new, far more efficient, electric ones, and to become  
49 role models for electrification for individual members and the broader community; and

50  
51 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod acknowledges the  
52 challenges of electrification for certain locations and settings and trusts the guidance of the Holy  
53 Spirit as each congregation and individual considers the practicality, or lack thereof, for their  
54 setting while still following the heart of the resolution; and

55  
56 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod urges United Church of  
57 Christ congregations to actively promote and advocate for electrification as one of the ways to  
58 protect all of God’s creation, and, with environmental justice in mind, help our communities  
59 electrify; and

60  
61 **BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod requests Conferences and  
62 Associations of the United Church of Christ to gather and distribute information and guidance  
63 for their local congregations and individual members necessary and helpful to implement  
64 electrification, thereby becoming role models for the broader community.

65  
66 **FUNDING:** Funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with  
67 the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

68  
69 **IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries  
70 or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

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<sup>1</sup> Stanford Earth Matters. “A roadmap to reducing greenhouse gas emissions 50 percent by 2030.” September 20, 2019. [https://exponentialroadmap.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/ExponentialRoadmap\\_1.5.1\\_216x279\\_08\\_AW\\_Download\\_Singles\\_Small.pdf](https://exponentialroadmap.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/ExponentialRoadmap_1.5.1_216x279_08_AW_Download_Singles_Small.pdf)

<sup>2</sup><https://uccfiles.com/pdf/gs26minutes.pdf>, pages 15-16

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> “Existing Buildings Electrification Strategy,” City of Berkeley, California, 4, 2021, pages 6 & 7; Fresh Energy, “What’s Up With Natural Gas in My Home,” February 24, 2021.

<sup>5</sup>Stanford Earth Matters. “A roadmap to reducing greenhouse gas emissions 50 percent by 2030.” September 20, 2019.

<sup>6</sup> Electrify Everything in Your Home. Joel Rosenberg. Rewiring America, 2.; Fresh Energy. “Buildings for a healthy future.” December 2021.

<sup>7</sup> Fresh Energy. “Our accomplishments of 2021 and what we are looking forward to in 2022: Further changes to coal plant operations secured & Otter Tail Power begins to exit coal and increase renewables.” January 24, 2022.

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/08/13/upshot/whats-in-the-democrats-climate-health-bill.html?name=styl-n-domestic-policy-bill~>



The following resolution was approved by the delegates at a plenary of the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ, held in Indianapolis June 30-July 4, 2023.

**FAITHFUL ADVOCACY FOR INTERSECTIONAL AND TRANSFORMATIONAL HEALING IN HARM REDUCTION**

**A Resolution of Witness**

**Text of the Resolution**

**WHEREAS** more than 932,000 people have died since 1999 from a drug overdose, and during 2021, more than 108,000 overdose deaths were recorded in the United States, an increase of 15% from the almost 94,000 overdose deaths during 2020.<sup>12</sup>

**WHEREAS** increases in drug overdose deaths are disproportionately affecting Black and Indigenous people in the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, fatal overdoses increased by 44% among Black people in 2020 compared with the year prior and rises in fatal drug overdose among American Indian and Alaska Native people — together saw a 39% increase over the previous year.<sup>3</sup>

**WHEREAS** U.S. drug policy drives the number of drug overdoses and overdose fatalities with the promotion of policy which centers the criminalization of people who use drugs, is rooted in racism, punishment, and harsh enforcement measures which fuel social marginalization, health inequities and crises, and mass incarceration.<sup>4</sup> More people are sent to prison in the United States for nonviolent drug offenses than for crimes of violence, and Black men are sent to state prison on drug charges at 13 times the rate of white men.<sup>5</sup>

**WHEREAS** structural barriers to compassionate, evidence-based, non-coercive, and culturally responsive care and treatment for substance use related health concerns, and substance use disorder, such as stigma, lack of services which address substance use across the spectrum, lack of healing centered engagement, lack of culturally sensitive services, and limitations imposed on prescribers/medical providers, means that many people who use drugs fall beyond the continuum of care.<sup>6</sup>

**WHEREAS** the stigmatization of people with lived and living experience of substance use and overdose fosters isolation, disconnection, and reinforces the narrative of substance use as a moral, sinful, individual issue rather than the complex, collective, psycho-social-spiritual-health issue that it is.<sup>7</sup>

**WHEREAS** pregnant and parenting people with lived experience of substance use face barriers to care, including threats of family separation, criminalization of substance use, and lack of access to culturally responsive, full-spectrum reproductive and other health care.<sup>8</sup>

**WHEREAS** migrant communities experience a significant burden of harm from the war on people who use drugs, including profiling based on race, intrusive government surveillance, anti-immigrant violence, and elevated rates of detention and deportation, for low-level, non-violent

39 drug related offenses. According to Human Rights Watch, deportations of non-citizens who had  
40 been convicted of drug possession increased 43 percent during a five-year period.<sup>9</sup>

41  
42 **WHEREAS** congregations and diverse settings of the United Church of Christ have been invited  
43 to adopt Just World Covenants to strengthen their engagement in building justice through their  
44 “ministry, mission, and witness” such as W.I.S.E (Welcoming Inclusive Supportive Engaged),<sup>10</sup>  
45 Open and Affirming,<sup>11</sup> and Immigrant Welcoming,<sup>12</sup> among others.

46  
47 **AND WHEREAS** adopting a covenant to become a harm reduction engaged congregation or  
48 community is a way of demonstrating commitment to live out the Gospel as expressed in the  
49 values of Harm Reduction and to bring about healing and justice for communities impacted by  
50 drug overdose and the war on people who use drugs, especially in communities of color.

51  
52 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United  
53 Church of Christ encourages United Church of Christ congregations to adopt covenants which  
54 commit to harm reduction values and practices and build communities of compassionate care,  
55 hospitality, and advocacy in partnership with people with lived experience of substance use and  
56 overdose, and their loved ones.

57  
58 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of  
59 Christ encourages congregations, associations, and conferences to work to eradicate drug-related  
60 stigma and dehumanization of people with lived and living experience of substance use and  
61 overdose, educate themselves on harm reduction and intersectional justice issues impacting  
62 people who use drugs and people who have experienced an overdose.

63  
64 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of  
65 Christ encourages advocacy by all settings of the church for broader and more just access to  
66 harm reduction services and programming including, but not limited to: syringe access programs,  
67 overdose prevention programs, expanded naloxone (medication to reverse opioid overdose)  
68 access and distribution, overdose prevention centers, access to evidence-based drug treatment,  
69 healing centered engagement, access to medication for all substance use disorders, as well as  
70 funding to support these harm reduction services.

71  
72 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of  
73 Christ requests that the United Church of Christ Board establish an annual Harm Reduction  
74 Justice Sunday to be observed on the third Sunday of August, in advance of International  
75 Overdose Awareness Day - August 31st.

76  
77 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of  
78 Christ calls upon the United Church of Christ Board to compile and maintain a list of materials,  
79 resources, and policies concerning substance use to be made available to all settings to help in  
80 their development and adoption of harm reduction policies.

81  
82 **BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that The Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of  
83 Christ encourages activism and advocacy by all settings of the church for the development and  
84 adoption of harm reduction policies grounded in science, compassion, health, and human rights.

85 This policy advocacy should include leadership by people with lived experience of substance  
86 use and overdose, and persons most vulnerable to structural violence including, but not limited  
87 to: Black, Indigenous, Latiné APIDA (Asian Pacific Islander Desi American), and other people  
88 of color, LGBTQIAN+ people, people who are not citizens, people experiencing poverty and  
89 people who are housing insecure, people who are incarcerated and with other criminal legal  
90 system involvement, people living in rural areas, people who are pregnant, women, young  
91 people, veterans and persons with disabilities.  
92

93 **FUNDING:** The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance  
94 with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.  
95

96 **IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries  
97 or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/deaths/index.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/deaths/index.html>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2022/s0719-overdose-rates-vs.html>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.vera.org/publications/overdose-deaths-and-jail-incarceration/national-trends-and-racial-disparities>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.vera.org/publications/overdose-deaths-and-jail-incarceration/national-trends-and-racial-disparities>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/harm-reduction#:~:text=Harm%20Reduction's%20Place%20in%20and,%2C%20overdose%2C%20and%20substance%20misuse.>

<sup>7</sup> <https://nida.nih.gov/about-nida/noras-blog/2020/04/addressing-stigma-surrounds-addiction>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.perinatalharmreduction.org/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/report/2015/06/16/price-too-high/us-families-torn-apart-deportations-drug-offenses>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.mhn-ucc.org/becoming-wise/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://openandaffirming.org/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://new.uccfiles.com/pdf/Becoming-an-immigrant-welcoming-congregation-updated-Nov-1-2012.pdf>

The following resolution was approved by the delegates at a plenary of the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ, held in Indianapolis June 30-July 4, 2023.

**A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR A NEW STUDY BY OUR CHURCH ON OUR  
RELATIONSHIP WITH THE INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOLS AND THE BOARDING  
SCHOOLS IN HAWAII**

**A Resolution of Witness**

**TEXT OF THE MOTION**

**WHEREAS**, an estimated 15 million Native American Indians have been exterminated in what is known today as the United States of America through policies defined as genocide<sup>1</sup>, and

**WHEREAS**, among the policies of genocide Native American Indians became victims of identity altering education programs, and

**WHEREAS**, the Civilization Fund Act of 1819’s intention was to introduce to Native Americans “the habits and arts of civilization”<sup>2</sup> (to force native American Indians to assimilate to White American culture), and

**WHEREAS**, in the decade following 1869 the Christian denominations began to establish boarding schools with the underlying policy to “kill the Indian and save the man,”<sup>3</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, one such boarding school was the Hampton Institute, founded by General Samuel Chapman Armstrong, son of A.B.C.F.M. missionaries to Hawai`i Rev. Richard and Clarissa Chapman Armstrong, which opened its doors to Indian students in 1878; and

**WHEREAS**, boarding schools were of paramount significance in the attempted cultural genocide of an entire people, and

**WHEREAS**, the mandatory placement of Indian children in the boarding schools resulted in the loss of hundreds of languages, spiritual beliefs, traditional practices, and the destruction of healthy family life;<sup>4</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, in 2003 the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM), the American Indian organization that is part of the United Church of Christ, submitted a resolution “American Indian Boarding Schools” that was passed by the General Synod<sup>5</sup> but did not result in reparations, and

**WHEREAS**, on September 30, 2021, a “Statement Supporting the Establishment of a Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies” was signed by the following church groups<sup>6</sup>: The Episcopal Church; Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; Franciscan Action Network; Friends Committee on National Legislation; Jesuit Conference Office of Justice and Ecology; Office of Race Relations, Christian Reformed Church of North America; The United Methodist Church—General Board of Church and Society,

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**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Thirty-fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ directs the UCC to thoroughly investigate and disclose its history beginning with the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission (ABCFM) <sup>7</sup>on its work done both with Native American nations and the Hawaiian Kingdom and evaluate what actions will be taken by the United Church of Christ to make amends of moral and legal (both under U.S. laws and under international humanitarian laws) violations that have occurred, and requests that the UCC Board ask for the cooperation of the Association of Hawaiian Evangelical Churches (AHEC) and the Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM) in so doing.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that if the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission (ABCFM) did receive funds from the Indian Civilization Fund Act of 1819, an act of the U.S. government, the investigation shall reveal what effects this had upon the mission of the church, and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, if the investigation reveals moral and legal violations, that the United Church of Christ begin its reparation process by formally apologizing for the harm done to the Native Hawaiians and to the Native American nations connected to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission (ABCFM); and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, if the investigation reveals moral and legal violations, that the United Church of Christ Board propose specific steps in the reparation process, and begin the reparation process by formally apologizing for the harm done to the Native Hawaiians and to the Native American nations connected to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission (ABCFM).

**FUNDING:** The funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

**IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries of other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementation body.

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<sup>1</sup> Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 2014), 10.

See also, David Michael Smith, "Counting the Dead: Estimating the Loss of Life in the Indigenous Holocaust, 1492-Present, 2017.

<sup>2</sup> Act of March 3, 1819, Ch. 85, 3 Stat. 516, codified at 25 U.S.C. at 271 (2020).

<sup>3</sup> <https://new.uccfiles.com/pdf/gs24minutes.pdf>, p. 41.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 41.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* p. 41f.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.warren.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Statement%20Supporting%20the%20Establishment%20of%20a%20Truth%20and%20Healing%20Commission.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions merged with United Church Board for World Missions in 1961 evolving into Wider Church Ministries of the UCC in 2000.

The following resolution was approved by the delegates at a plenary of the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ, held in Indianapolis June 30-July 4, 2023.

**A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATORS, ACADEMIC FREEDOM, AND EQUITY EFFORTS IN SCHOOLS**

**A Resolution of Witness**

**TEXT OF THE MOTION**

**WHEREAS** the United Church of Christ was founded by denominations with education as a central aspect of our identities and has always been a firm advocate for education, with the Church having had a hand in the founding of many colleges and universities, including many Historically Black Colleges and Universities, which grew from the hundreds of schools founded by the American Missionary Association after the Civil War;<sup>i</sup> and

**WHEREAS** the United Church of Christ has been committed to being an Open and Affirming, Anti-Racist, Environmental Justice, Just Peace denomination;<sup>ii</sup> and

**WHEREAS** we in the United Church of Christ believe there is “ever more truth and light to be brought forward” from our scriptures, as well as from our world and our people;<sup>iii, iv</sup> and

**WHEREAS** the United Church of Christ has claimed to be a thinking church as well as a feeling and believing church;<sup>v</sup> and

**WHEREAS** the United Church of Christ has demonstrated its commitment to learning about the sins and legacies of slavery, segregation, Jim Crow laws, immigration quotas, internment camps, boarding schools, anti-miscegenation laws, sodomy laws, discriminatory housing policies, discriminatory healthcare policies, and other practices that have contributed to ongoing disparities of resources and opportunities for oppressed peoples, without fearing the discomfort that can accompany such learning;<sup>vi, vii, viii</sup> and

**WHEREAS** the United Church of Christ has demonstrated its commitment to addressing the sins of violence and oppression experienced by women, LGBTQ+ people, people with disabilities, people of religious minorities, immigrants, refugees, Native American/Indigenous people, Black people, Latinx people, Asian people, and all others who have suffered oppression in this country;<sup>ix, x, xi, xii, xiii</sup> and

**WHEREAS** students benefit greatly from the study of literature and art that addresses the full range of being human;<sup>xiv</sup> and

**WHEREAS** proposals to ban discussions of sexual orientation and gender identity in schools send a profoundly negative message of non-acceptance to students whose romantic attraction does not conform to heteronormative assumptions, and to students who may be experiencing gender dysphoria or who have already realized that their real gender does not match that which was assigned at birth and by socialization;<sup>xv</sup>

39  
40 **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United  
41 Church of Christ declares that it is vital for every person, of every race, skin color, culture,  
42 religion, language status, gender, sexual orientation, disability, income, and/or family  
43 background to be given an opportunity to see themselves and their neighbors represented, to  
44 access truthful information, and to learn from our past; so students are better equipped to  
45 advocate for, and to reach, their full potential as critical thinkers in school environments that  
46 continually strive for equity in all aspects of schooling, from academics and curriculum to extra-  
47 curricular activities and school culture;<sup>xvi</sup>

48  
49 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of  
50 Christ affirms support of our public education systems and educators, as well as academic  
51 freedom, and the right of educators to make decisions that are in the best interest of ALL  
52 students, consistent with peer-reviewed research and best practice;

53  
54 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United  
55 Church of Christ declares that on-going thoughtful evaluation of teaching methodology and  
56 content is a necessary part of strengthening our schools, but harassment of teachers,  
57 administrators, and school board members is harmful to them, to the schools and educational  
58 systems they represent, and, most especially, to the students they serve.

59  
60 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of  
61 Christ stands against efforts to inflame the public with hateful rhetoric toward educators; to  
62 censor or ban what is taught in public school classrooms; to censor or ban books and media in  
63 school libraries; to deny the histories of oppression experienced by marginalized groups; to deny  
64 racism, sexism, heterosexism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, ableism, and other forms of prejudice,  
65 bias, and hate; and to impose burdensome disclosure mandates related to classroom lessons,  
66 assignments, and activities;

67  
68 **BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of  
69 Christ encourages all settings of the Church to use this resolution for the development of talking  
70 points for presentation in public arenas where such matters are being dealt with, including state  
71 legislatures, local school boards, parent-teacher associations, ministerial associations, community  
72 groups, and the like.

73  
74 **FUNDING:** The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance  
75 with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

76  
77 **IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries  
78 or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

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<sup>i</sup> United Church of Christ: *History*: <https://www.ucc.org/who-we-are/about/history/>

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- <sup>ii</sup> United Church of Christ: *We are People of Extravagant Welcome*: [https://www.ucc.org/who-we-are/about/general-synod/general-synod-resolutions-regarding-environmental-justice/vitality/vitality\\_boost-your-vitality/vitality\\_what-matters/vitality\\_what-matters\\_we-are-people-of-extravagant/](https://www.ucc.org/who-we-are/about/general-synod/general-synod-resolutions-regarding-environmental-justice/vitality/vitality_boost-your-vitality/vitality_what-matters/vitality_what-matters_we-are-people-of-extravagant/)
- <sup>iii</sup> United Church of Christ: *We Listen for a Still-speaking God*: [https://www.ucc.org/who-we-are/about/general-synod/general-synod-resolutions-regarding-environmental-justice/vitality/vitality\\_boost-your-vitality/vitality\\_what-matters/vitality\\_what-matters\\_we-listen-for-a/](https://www.ucc.org/who-we-are/about/general-synod/general-synod-resolutions-regarding-environmental-justice/vitality/vitality_boost-your-vitality/vitality_what-matters/vitality_what-matters_we-listen-for-a/)
- <sup>iv</sup> United Church of Christ in New Brighton: *Our Values and Beliefs*: <https://uccnb.org/who-we-are/our-values-and-beliefs>
- <sup>v</sup> United Church of Christ: *Not Mutually Exclusive*: [https://www.ucc.org/who-we-are/about/general-synod/general-synod-resolutions-regarding-environmental-justice/not-mutually-exclusive\\_index/](https://www.ucc.org/who-we-are/about/general-synod/general-synod-resolutions-regarding-environmental-justice/not-mutually-exclusive_index/)
- <sup>vi</sup> United Church of Christ: *White Privilege: Let's Talk – A Resource for Transformational Dialogue*: <http://privilege.uccpages.org/>
- <sup>vii</sup> United Church of Christ: *Sacred Conversations to End Racism*: <https://www.ucc.org/sacred-conversations-to-end-racism/>
- <sup>viii</sup> United Church of Christ: *Our Whole Lives*: <https://www.ucc.org/what-we-do/justice-local-church-ministries/justice/health-and-wholeness-advocacy-ministries/our-whole-lives/>
- <sup>ix</sup> United Church of Christ: *A Summary of General Synod Actions 1957-1999*: <https://www.ucc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/summary-of-gs-actions-1957-1999.pdf>
- <sup>x</sup> United Church of Christ: *United Church of Christ Called to be an Anti-Racist Church, Adopted 2003 General Synod Multiracial/Multicultural Addendum to 1993 Pronouncement and Proposal for Action*: [https://www.ucc.org/what-we-do/justice-local-church-ministries/justice/faithful-action-ministries/racial-justice/justice\\_racism\\_anti-racist-church/](https://www.ucc.org/what-we-do/justice-local-church-ministries/justice/faithful-action-ministries/racial-justice/justice_racism_anti-racist-church/)
- <sup>xi</sup> United Church of Christ: *Social Policy Statements on LGBT Concerns*: [https://www.ucc.org/what-we-do/justice-local-church-ministries/justice/health-and-wholeness-advocacy-ministries/lgbtq-ministries/lgbt\\_statements/](https://www.ucc.org/what-we-do/justice-local-church-ministries/justice/health-and-wholeness-advocacy-ministries/lgbtq-ministries/lgbt_statements/)
- <sup>xii</sup> United Church of Christ: *Doctrine of Discovery*: [https://www.ucc.org/what-we-do/justice-local-church-ministries/justice/faithful-action-ministries/racial-justice/justice\\_racism\\_doctrine-of-discovery/](https://www.ucc.org/what-we-do/justice-local-church-ministries/justice/faithful-action-ministries/racial-justice/justice_racism_doctrine-of-discovery/)
- <sup>xiii</sup> United Church of Christ: *General Synod Resolution Calls the church to More Disability Justice*: [https://www.ucc.org/general\\_synod\\_resolution\\_calls\\_the\\_church\\_to\\_more\\_disability\\_justice/](https://www.ucc.org/general_synod_resolution_calls_the_church_to_more_disability_justice/)
- <sup>xiv</sup> Gay, G. (2003). Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. *The Importance of Multicultural Education*: <https://www.ascd.org/el/articles/the-importance-of-multicultural-education>
- <sup>xv</sup> Parris, D., Fulks, E. & Kelley, C. (2021). Child Trends: *Anti-LGBTQ Policy Proposals Can Harm Youth Mental Health*: <https://www.childtrends.org/publications/anti-lgbtq-policy-proposals-can-harm-youth-mental-health>
- <sup>xvi</sup> Bloomberg, L.D. (2022). Teachers College Press Blog. *Culturally Inclusive Pedagogy: Empowering Responsive and Reflective Educators*: <https://www.tcpres.com/blog/culturally-inclusive-pedagogy-empowering-responsive-reflective-educators>



The following resolution was approved by the delegates at a plenary of the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ, held in Indianapolis June 30-July 4, 2023.

**CALLING ON UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST LOCAL CHURCHES TO WITNESS  
“A WHITE SUPREMACY-FREE ZONE” & CONFRONTING WHITE SUPREMACY**

**A Resolution of Witness**

**TEXT OF THE MOTION**

**WHEREAS**, Exodus 20:3 admonishes us to “. . . *have no other gods before me,*” and

**WHEREAS**, Jesus in the Gospel of Luke chapter four teaches us, “It is written, ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him,’” and

**WHEREAS**, as people of faith, rooted in the gospel of justice, we are admonished to tear down the idols that keep us from the simple but true worship of God,<sup>1</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, God created humankind in God’s image and likeness, people are image bearers, sharing equal status as human beings. God did not create race, racism, superior groups of humans, and hierarchical and hegemonic social structures<sup>2</sup>, and

**WHEREAS**, the Nineteenth General Synod, 1993, passed a Statement of Christian Conviction of the Proposed Pronouncement Calling the United Church of Christ to be a Multiracial and Multicultural Church.<sup>3</sup> The call to be a multiracial and multicultural church is an acknowledgement that racial justice is the inclusiveness of all humans and never excludes anyone based on skin color, culture or ethnic origin, and

**WHEREAS**, the Twenty-Fifth General Synod, 2003, addressed white supremacy through calling on the United Church of Christ Called to be an Anti-Racist Church<sup>4</sup>, and

**WHEREAS**, the Thirty-First General Synod, 2017, Affirming and Supporting the Authorized Ministries of Under-Represented Clergy in Local Congregations: A Call for Greater Representation and Economic Justice<sup>5</sup>, and

**WHEREAS**, the Thirty-First General Synod, 2017, addressing white supremacy through calling On Establishing Procedures for Cultural Diversity Training for Authorized Ministers<sup>6</sup>, and

**WHEREAS**, for a local church to declare their communities and settings as “A White Supremacy-Free Zone” is to take away the quiet existence of racism and white idolatry and forces the issue into the communities in which UCC houses of worship exist, and

**WHEREAS**, for a local church to publicly express that “We are confronting white supremacy,” forces the discussion and action to end white supremacy, and

**WHEREAS**, God has not given us a spirit of fear, but the spirit of power, of courage and

39 resolution, to meet difficulties and dangers; the spirit of love which will carry us through  
40 opposition.” 2 Timothy 1:7, and

41  
42 **WHEREAS**, it is time for the White Church to experience its own Damascus Road Story – to  
43 have an “Aha!” moment that transforms our local congregations and denomination away from  
44 unjust and unholy political, economic, and social structures that degrade people of color as  
45 inferior and are supported by European-centered theology,<sup>7</sup> and

46  
47 **WHEREAS**, the Damascus Road Story requires a journey of confronting White Supremacy  
48 through questions, discussion, study of White Privilege, White Supremacy and Systemic Racism,  
49 and then planning for and moving to action to become anti-racist and disrupt racism now, and

50  
51 **WHEREAS**, the UCC continues to advocate for the dismantling of racism through education,  
52 study, policy and action, and

53  
54 **WHEREAS**, the Potomac Association of the Central Atlantic Conference of the United Church  
55 of Christ, supporters of the resolution, have developed a plan for its implementation and calls on  
56 UCC local churches to begin the journey of Confronting White Supremacy and becoming a  
57 White Supremacy-Free Zone, and

58  
59 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church  
60 of Christ calls on all settings of the UCC, including local churches of predominantly European  
61 descent and local UCC churches in general, to confront the idolatry of white supremacy, in  
62 witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ,

63  
64 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United  
65 Church of Christ calls on UCC local churches of predominantly European descent, and UCC  
66 local churches in general, to embark on an intentional journey of public commitment, study, and  
67 action to actively construct “A White Supremacy-Free Zone,”

68  
69 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United  
70 Church of Christ calls for action through the implementation of <sup>8</sup>“Journey Towards Confronting  
71 White Supremacy and Creating a White Supremacy-Free Zone Local Congregation: An  
72 Intentional Study and Action Guide to Challenge Racism and White Supremacy,”

73  
74 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United  
75 Church of Christ encourages all local churches to participate in the implementation of this  
76 resolution, starting wherever they are,

77  
78 **AND BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United  
79 Church of Christ calls on UCC local churches of predominantly European descent, and UCC  
80 local churches in general, to publicly express, “We are confronting white supremacy.” Together,  
81 let us unite, challenge systems of oppression, and promote a future of equality and justice,  
82 reflecting the love and character of our Creator.

83

84 **FUNDING:** The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance  
85 with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

86  
87 **IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries  
88 or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

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<sup>1</sup> *Jesus and the Disinherited*, Rev. Howard Thurman, 1949

<sup>2</sup> NYTimes, *1619 Project*, 2022 <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/08/14/magazine/1619-america-slavery.html>

<sup>3</sup> Resolution “Statement of Christian Conviction of the Proposed Pronouncement Calling the United Church of Christ to be a Multiracial and Multicultural Church”. Adopted by the 1993 General Synod. [https://www.ucc.org/justice\\_multiracial-multicultural/justice\\_multiracial-multicultural\\_pronouncement/](https://www.ucc.org/justice_multiracial-multicultural/justice_multiracial-multicultural_pronouncement/)

<sup>4</sup> United Church of Christ Called to be an Anti-Racist Church. Adopted by the 2003 General Synod as Multiracial/Multicultural Addendum to the 1993 Pronouncement & Proposal for Action. [https://www.ucc.org/what-we-do/justice-local-church-ministries/justice/faithful-action-ministries/racial-justice/justice\\_racism\\_anti-racist-church/](https://www.ucc.org/what-we-do/justice-local-church-ministries/justice/faithful-action-ministries/racial-justice/justice_racism_anti-racist-church/)

<sup>5</sup> Resolution Affirming & Supporting the Authorized Ministries of Under-Represented Clergy in Local Congregations: A Call for Greater Representation & Economic Justice. A Prudential Resolution, Adopted by the Thirty-first General Synod, July 3, 2017, Baltimore, Maryland. [https://www.ucc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/2017\\_AFFIRMING\\_SUPPORTING\\_AUTHORIZED\\_MINISTRIES\\_OF\\_UNDER\\_REP\\_CLERGY\\_IN\\_LOCAL\\_CONGREGATIONS.pdf](https://www.ucc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/2017_AFFIRMING_SUPPORTING_AUTHORIZED_MINISTRIES_OF_UNDER_REP_CLERGY_IN_LOCAL_CONGREGATIONS.pdf)

<sup>6</sup>Resolution On Establishing Procedures for Cultural Diversity. Adopted by the Thirty-first General Synod, July 3, 2017, Baltimore, Maryland

<sup>7</sup> Robert Jones, Phd, *White Too Long*, 2020

<sup>8</sup> [https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1WUnhr2RceKtr5-7OxJu1erTczkdgZ78\\_/edit#slide=id.p1](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1WUnhr2RceKtr5-7OxJu1erTczkdgZ78_/edit#slide=id.p1)

The following minority resolution was approved by the 226 delegates in the minority at a plenary of the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ, held in Indianapolis June 30-July 4, 2023.

### **Minority Resolution**

#### **TEXT OF THE RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS** the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ, by two-thirds vote passed an amendment to its bylaws moving the frequency of the General Synod from every two to every three years the minority seeks to have its voice formally recorded in a minority resolution.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the minority of 226 delegates affirms their objection to this amendment to the bylaws on the basis of, but not limited to, the decrease of in person fellowship that Scriptures directs (Hebrews 10:24), stewardship, extended leadership terms and their extensions' impact on leadership opportunities and development in the Church.

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED THAT** we compel the Board of Directors to form a committee tasked with identifying and deploying strategies that support fellowship within and between Conferences and with the National Setting.

**Funding:** The funding for the implementation of the Resolution be made in accordance with overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

**Implementation:** The United Church of Christ Board, in consultation with the Conferences and the National Setting shall form a committee to determine the implementing body.

The following resolution was approved by the delegates at a plenary of the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ, held in Indianapolis June 30-July 4, 2023.

**Closing the Digital Divide: Calling on the United Church of Christ  
to Seek Digital Justice and Inclusion**

**A Resolution of Witness**

**TEXT OF THE MOTION**

**WHEREAS** few areas of life are not impacted by digital access and use and there is a growing correlation between quality digital access and use and increased economic, educational,<sup>1</sup> health,<sup>2</sup> labor,<sup>3</sup> and social opportunities and mobility;<sup>4</sup> and

**WHEREAS** thirty percent of school-age children in the United States<sup>5</sup> (two-thirds of those whose family income is below the federal poverty level<sup>6</sup>) and two-thirds of students globally<sup>7</sup> do not have adequate, reliable internet access at home; and

**WHEREAS** the COVID pandemic laid bare the injustice of the digital divide, further widening educational,<sup>8</sup> economic,<sup>9</sup> and opportunities<sup>10</sup> gaps<sup>11</sup> between those who have high quality digital access and those who do not; and

**WHEREAS** the United Church of Christ has long recognized the unique power of media to give meaningful voice to diverse peoples, cultures, and ideas and in so doing to shape society; and,

**WHEREAS** the ability to use new and evolving technologies is essential for strengthening relationships and building peaceful communities, and especially for the hearing, centering, and amplifying of voices of those on the margins;<sup>12</sup> and

**WHEREAS** disparities in digital access reflect gender,<sup>13</sup> race,<sup>14</sup> geographic,<sup>15</sup> ability,<sup>16</sup> and economic<sup>17</sup> privilege, systemically entrenching existing<sup>18</sup> inequalities<sup>19</sup> in the United States; and,

**WHEREAS** this divide is similarly<sup>20</sup> experienced<sup>21</sup> globally,<sup>22</sup> further exacerbating<sup>23</sup> inequalities<sup>24</sup> especially for previously colonized nations while also impeding<sup>25</sup> progress toward global commitments to the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals; and,

**WHEREAS** the work of justice and ministry in the church is critically tied to sustainable development,<sup>26</sup> intersecting with the broad work of the global Sustainable Development Goals<sup>27</sup> and with specific actions including eliminating poverty, embracing sustainability, and empowering others for progress; and,

**WHEREAS** the United Church of Christ has consistently and repeatedly taken a stand for justice for all God's children including for racial, social, disability, economic, and digital justice;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ identifies the globally widening digital divide and lack of digital inclusion as a

39 justice issue, and invites all settings of the United Church of Christ to do likewise while working  
40 with, among other organizations, United Church of Christ Media Justice Ministry, raising  
41 awareness among constituents, and joining faith-based and other coalitions pressing for digital  
42 justice including through increased affordability, accessibility, training, and support; and  
43

44 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of  
45 Christ encourages the National Setting, Conferences, and Associations to develop digital-  
46 inclusion activities and policies with attention to advocacy, access to internet-enabled devices,  
47 skills training, digital programming support, and online content designed to enable and promote  
48 self-sufficiency, participation, and collaboration; and  
49

50 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of  
51 Christ encourages the National Setting, Conferences, and Associations to support rural  
52 congregations, and other congregations challenged by the current lack of digital infrastructure, in  
53 assessing local internet availability and affordability, networking them for collaborative action;  
54 and,  
55

56 **BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of  
57 Christ urges all settings of the United Church of Christ to advocate for digital justice and  
58 affordable, quality digital access for all, especially those who are left out or held back by  
59 systemic inequalities within the United States and around the world.  
60

#### 61 **FUNDING**

62 The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance with the  
63 overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.  
64

#### 65 **IMPLEMENTATION**

66 The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within  
67 the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.  
68

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph, Patrick and Irene Lew. “Disconnected: The Digital Divide & Disrupted Schooling in NYC.” Community Service Society, 1 Sept. 2022, <https://www.cssny.org/news/entry/disconnected-the-digital-divide-disrupted-schooling-in-nyc>.

<sup>2</sup> Holpuch, Amanda. “US's digital divide 'is going to kill people' as Covid-19 exposes inequalities.” *The Guardian*, 13 April 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/13/coronavirus-covid-19-exposes-cracks-us-digital-divide>.

<sup>3</sup> Townsend, Phela. “Disconnected: How the Digital Divide Harms Workers and What We Can Do about It.” *The Century Foundation*, 22 Oct. 2020, <https://tcf.org/content/report/disconnected-digital-divide-harms-workers-can/>.

<sup>4</sup> See, e.g., Sanders, C. K. and Edward Scanlon. “The Digital Divide Is a Human Rights Issue: Advancing Social Inclusion Through Social Work Advocacy.” *Journal of Human Rights and Social Work*, vol. 6, no. 2, 2021, pp. 130-143, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7973804/>; “The Lewis Latimer Plan for Digital Equity and Inclusion.” National Urban League, 21 April 2021, [https://nul.org/sites/default/files/2021-04/NUL%20LL%20DEIA%20041421%20Latimer%20Plan\\_vFINAL\\_1136AM.pdf](https://nul.org/sites/default/files/2021-04/NUL%20LL%20DEIA%20041421%20Latimer%20Plan_vFINAL_1136AM.pdf); “The Benefits of Broadband Expansion to America’s Economy, Education, and Health: A Policy Brief.” Common Sense Kids Action, 2015, <https://www.common Sense Media.org/sites/default/files/featured->

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[content/files/benefits\\_of\\_broadband\\_expansion\\_to\\_americas\\_economy\\_education\\_and\\_health-cska-2015\\_1.pdf](#).

<sup>5</sup> Chandra, S., et al. “Closing the K–12 Digital Divide in the Age of Distance Learning.” Common Sense Media (San Francisco, CA) and Boston Consulting Group (Boston, MA), 2020,

[https://8ce82b94a8c4fdc3ea6d-b1d233e3bc3cb10858bea65ff05e18f2.ssl.cf2.rackcdn.com/9c/0b/62d34d674c979876e9b13be353df/common-sense-media-report-final-6-26-7.38am\\_WEB.pdf](https://8ce82b94a8c4fdc3ea6d-b1d233e3bc3cb10858bea65ff05e18f2.ssl.cf2.rackcdn.com/9c/0b/62d34d674c979876e9b13be353df/common-sense-media-report-final-6-26-7.38am_WEB.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Katz, Vikki, and Victoria Rideout. “Learning at Home While under-Connected.” *New America*, Rutgers University, 24 June 2021, <https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/reports/learning-at-home-while-underconnected/key-findings/>.

<sup>7</sup> “How many children and young people have internet access at home? Estimating digital connectivity during the COVID-19 pandemic.” United Nations Children’s Fund and International Telecommunication Union, UNICEF, New York, 2020. <https://data.unicef.org/resources/children-and-young-people-internet-access-at-home-during-covid19/>.

<sup>8</sup> Dorn, E. et al. “Covid-19 and education: An emerging K-shaped recovery.” McKinsey & Company, December 2021, <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/education/our-insights/covid-19-and-education-an-emerging-k-shaped-recovery>; “The Lewis Latimer Plan for Digital Equity and Inclusion.” National Urban League, 21 April 2021, [https://nul.org/sites/default/files/2021-04/NUL%20LL%20DEIA%20041421%20Latimer%20Plan\\_vFINAL\\_1136AM.pdf](https://nul.org/sites/default/files/2021-04/NUL%20LL%20DEIA%20041421%20Latimer%20Plan_vFINAL_1136AM.pdf).

<sup>9</sup> Francis, Dania V., and Christian E. Weller. “Economic Inequality, the Digital Divide, and Remote Learning During COVID-19.” *The Review of Black Political Economy*, vol. 49, no. 1, March 2022, pp. 41-60, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8914302/>.

<sup>10</sup> Reardon, M. “The digital divide has left millions of schoolkids behind.” CNET, 5 May 2021. <https://www.cnet.com/home/internet/the-digital-divide-has-left-millions-of-school-kids-behind/>.

<sup>11</sup> “Overview.” World Bank, 11 Oct. 2022, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/education/overview>.

<sup>12</sup> *Expanding Shrinking Communication Spaces*. Lee, Philip and Lorenzo Vargas, eds, Southbound, 2020.

<sup>13</sup> Fogel, Rebecca. “The Digital Divide: Gender and technology in an unequal world.” *Urban@UW*, University of Washington, 6 Nov. 2020. <https://urban.uw.edu/news/the-digital-divide-gender-and-technology-in-an-unequal-world/>.

<sup>14</sup> Chakravorti, Bhaskar. “How to Close the Digital Divide in the U.S.” *Harvard Business Review*, 20 July 2021, <https://hbr.org/2021/07/how-to-close-the-digital-divide-in-the-u-s>.

<sup>15</sup> Vogels, Emily A.

<sup>16</sup> Perrin, Andrew, and Sara Atske. “How Can We Ensure That More People with Disabilities Have Access to Digital Devices?” *World Economic Forum*, 16 Sept. 2021,

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2021/09/disability-barrier-to-digital-device-ownership>.

<sup>17</sup> Townsend, Phela.

<sup>18</sup> Ferraro, Nicole. “Study highlights impact of ‘digital redlining.’” *Light Reading*, 25 Aug. 2022.

<https://www.lightreading.com/digital-divide/study-highlights-impact-of-digital-redlining/d/d-id/779933>.

<sup>19</sup> Le, Vinhcent and Gissela Moya. “On the Wrong Side of the Digital Divide.” Greenlighting Institute, 2 June 2020, <https://greenlining.org/publications/online-resources/2020/on-the-wrong-side-of-the-digital-divide/>.

<sup>20</sup> “With Almost Half of World's Population Still Offline, Digital Divide Risks Becoming 'New Face of Inequality', Deputy Secretary-General Warns General Assembly.” United Nations, Office of Deputy Secretary-General, United Nations Press, 27 Apr. 2021, <https://press.un.org/en/2021/dsgsm1579.doc.htm>.

<sup>21</sup> “Digital Skills Critical for Jobs and Social Inclusion.” *UNESCO.org*, UNESCO, 21 Apr. 2022, <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/digital-skills-critical-jobs-and-social-inclusion>.

<sup>22</sup> “How many children and young people have internet access at home? Estimating digital connectivity during the COVID-19 pandemic.”

<sup>23</sup> O’Sullivan, Katriona, et al. “A Just Digital Framework to Ensure Equitable Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.” *Nature Communications*, vol. 12, article no. 6345, 3 Nov. 2021,

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-021-26217-8>.

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<sup>24</sup> *The Age of Digital Interdependence: Report of the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation*. See especially chapter 2, "Leaving No One Behind."

<sup>25</sup> Sheppard, Bede. "Years Don't Wait for Them." Human Rights Watch, 17 May 2021, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2021/05/17/years-dont-wait-them/increased-inequalities-childrens-right-education-due-covid>.

<sup>26</sup> "Towards a Sustainable Future." United Church of Christ, 1 Apr. 2021, <https://www.ucc.org/event/towards-a-sustainable-future/>.

<sup>27</sup> See, for example, "Worship Resources." One Great Hour of Sharing, United Church of Christ, 2018, [https://www.ucc.org/oghs\\_february\\_4/](https://www.ucc.org/oghs_february_4/) and [https://www.ucc.org/oghs\\_march\\_4/](https://www.ucc.org/oghs_march_4/).



The following resolution was approved by the delegates at a plenary of the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ, held in Indianapolis June 30-July 4, 2023.

## **A Resolution to Study and Develop Reparations Proposals for African Americans**

### **A Resolution of Witness**

#### **TEXT OF THE MOTION**

1     **TEXT OF THE MOTION**  
2  
3     WHEREAS the institution of slavery is internationally recognized as a crime for which there is  
4     no statute of limitations.<sup>1</sup>

5  
6     WHEREAS the enslavement of Africans fueled the prosperity of our young nation, allowing its  
7     economy to reap the benefits of unpaid labor of untold value.<sup>2</sup>

8  
9     WHEREAS the ministry of the One we follow, Jesus, speaking in the tradition of the prophets of  
10    Israel that was his tradition, called his followers to a project of political transformation to a God-  
11    centered society, including forgiveness of debts and equitable distribution of resources.

12  
13    WHEREAS we fervently strive to enact the prayer Jesus taught his followers, “On Earth as it is  
14    in Heaven.”

15  
16    WHEREAS the United Church of Christ affirms in its bylaws (Justice and Witness Ministries  
17    section 268) that the Church in all its expressions is encouraged to speak prophetically on  
18    matters of justice, power, and public policy; to confront expressions of injustice and alienation in  
19    the Church and in society.

20  
21    WHEREAS in 1991, the United Church of Christ issued the *Pastoral Letter on Racism and the*  
22    *Role of the Church*<sup>3</sup> that called the Church to advance issues of racial justice.

23  
24    WHEREAS at the 23rd General Synod of the United Church of Christ (2001), the Synod adopted  
25    the Resolution, “A Call for Study on Reparations for Slavery.”<sup>4</sup>

26  
27    WHEREAS at the 24th General Synod of the United Church of Christ (2003), Executive  
28    Minister Rev. Bernice Powell Jackson presented the study and discussion guide, *Reparations: A*  
29    *Process for Repairing the Breach*.<sup>5</sup>

30  
31    WHEREAS in 2008, the UCC Collegium issued *The Pastoral Letter on Racism* that articulated  
32    “the challenges and opportunities of a Sacred Conversation at this time in our nation’s history  
33    and the life of our church.”<sup>6</sup>

34  
35    WHEREAS the late Rep. Conyers Jr. (D MI-13) introduced to the 115th Congress of the United  
36    States (2017-2018), the Commission to Study Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act.<sup>7</sup>  
37

38 WHEREAS in the wake of Rep. Conyers passing, Representative Sheila Jackson Lee (D TX-18)  
39 introduced into the first session of the 117th Congress (2021-2022), the Commission to Study  
40 Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act<sup>8</sup>.

41  
42 WHEREAS in April 2021, United Church of Christ leaders supported the Commission to Study  
43 Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act, publishing, “UCC Leaders Laud Historic  
44 Legislation on Reparations, Heading to House Vote<sup>9</sup>.”

45  
46 WHEREAS in 2022, the United Church of Christ launched the *Join the Movement*<sup>10</sup> campaign  
47 that stated, in part, “As followers of Jesus, we believe it is our mandate to work for and seek  
48 justice, love, and compassion, as we join with and become our own Spirit-led movements toward  
49 racial justice.”

50  
51 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of  
52 Christ publicly proclaims its support of the *Commission to Study and Develop Reparation*  
53 *Proposals for African Americans Act* and like-legislation that establishes a commission to study  
54 and develop reparation proposals for African Americans as defined in Section 3 of the referenced  
55 Act.

56  
57 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of  
58 Christ encourages all settings of the United Church of Christ to study the *Commission to Study*  
59 *and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act* and like-legislation that  
60 establishes a commission to study and develop reparation proposals for African Americans as  
61 defined in Section 3 of the referenced Act.

62  
63 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of  
64 Christ requests that the United Church of Christ Board support new and ongoing commitments  
65 and actions to further the work of the Reparatory Justice and Reparations Ministry of the United  
66 Church of Christ National setting.

67  
68 BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of  
69 Christ requests that the United Church of Christ Board form a Reparations Legislative Task  
70 Force, with input from the United Church of Christ Washington DC Office and the Reparatory  
71 Justice and Reparations Ministry of the United Church of Christ National setting.

72 The duties of this taskforce shall include but not be limited to:

- 73 (a) designing and developing an advocacy toolkit that will equip all settings of the UCC to  
74 ask members of Congress to take-up the Act for floor debate and ultimately to pass the  
75 *Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act* and  
76 like-legislation;
- 77 (b) issuing an open call to all settings of the UCC to monitor and communicate legislative  
78 actions, and participate in advocacy actions to enact the *Commission to Study and*  
79 *Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act* and like-legislation.

80  
81  
82 **FUNDING**

83 The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance with the  
84 overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

85

## 86 **IMPLEMENTATION**

87 The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within  
88 the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/RS-Eng.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://naacp.org/resources/reparations-unpaid-labor-rendered-enslaved-persons-african-descent-0>

<sup>3</sup> [http://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/unitedchurchofchrist/legacy\\_url/388/Pastoral-Letter-on-Racism-NEW-small.pdf?1418423752](http://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/unitedchurchofchrist/legacy_url/388/Pastoral-Letter-on-Racism-NEW-small.pdf?1418423752)

<sup>4</sup> <http://uccfiles.com/synod/resolutions/CALL-FOR-STUDY-ON-REPARATIONS-FOR-SLAVERY.pdf>

5

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/552a993ce4b0c842cdb585ad/t/627d92037f6d991914a0528a/1652396549042/Reparations+A+Process+for+Repairing+the+Breach.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> [http://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/unitedchurchofchrist/legacy\\_url/388/Pastoral-Letter-on-Racism-NEW-small.pdf?1418423752](http://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/unitedchurchofchrist/legacy_url/388/Pastoral-Letter-on-Racism-NEW-small.pdf?1418423752)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/40>

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/40#:~:text=Introduced%20in%20House%20\(01%2F04%2F2021\)&text=This%20bill%20establishes%20the%20Commission,present%20and%20recommend%20appropriate%20remedies.](https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/40#:~:text=Introduced%20in%20House%20(01%2F04%2F2021)&text=This%20bill%20establishes%20the%20Commission,present%20and%20recommend%20appropriate%20remedies.)

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.ucc.org/ucc-leaders-laud-historic-legislation-on-reparations-heading-to-house-vote/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://jointhemovementucc.org/>

The following resolution was approved by the delegates at a plenary of the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ, held in Indianapolis June 30-July 4, 2023.

**AFFIRMING GUNS TO GARDENS AND OTHER GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION MINISTRIES**

**A Resolution of Witness**

1 **TEXT OF THE MOTION**

2  
3 **WHEREAS** there is an absence of federal action on gun control and safety; and

4  
5 **WHEREAS** we are called to co-create with the Holy Spirit the kingdom of God in this world – a  
6 kingdom of peace and justice and care; and

7  
8 **WHEREAS** there is an opportunity for individual congregations, associations and conferences  
9 to provide practical, pastoral and prophetic ministry related to preventing gun violence;

10 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church  
11 of Christ declares the time has come for us all – individuals, congregations, associations, and  
12 conferences– to actively promote peace and engage in efforts to end gun violence;

13  
14 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of  
15 Christ implores all United Church of Christ individuals, congregations, associations and  
16 conferences to pray for peace and for an end to these horrific acts of violence, and to let our  
17 prayers move us to meaningful action;

18  
19 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that we give thanks, pray for, and commend the congregations  
20 and organizations that have participated in gun violence prevention programs such as the Guns to  
21 Gardens project as a way to responsibly dispose of unwanted firearms;

22  
23 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of  
24 Christ calls on individuals, congregations, associations, and conferences in the United Church of  
25 Christ to learn about the Guns to Gardens project and prayerfully consider if it is a ministry to  
26 which they are called as part of our witness to prevent gun violence, save lives, and provide  
27 healing for a nation traumatized by violence;

28  
29 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of  
30 Christ calls on congregations, associations, and conferences in the United Church of Christ to  
31 prayerfully consider joining the Guns to Gardens movement,<sup>1</sup> and to host safe surrender events  
32 for unwanted guns to be dismantled according to rules of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco,  
33 Firearms, and Explosives;

34  
35 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of  
36 Christ calls on congregations, associations, and conferences in the United Church of Christ to  
37 prayerfully consider hosting events to give away gun safes and/or locks to promote safe storage  
38 of firearms to prevent unauthorized use and accidental use; and

39  
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51

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ asks Justice and Local Church Ministries to compile and share materials from existing gun violence prevention ministries to assist UCC congregations with guidance in offering gun violence prevention ministries.

**FUNDING:** The funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

**IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

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<sup>1</sup> The copyright for “Guns to Gardens” is held by New Mexicans to Prevent Gun Violence. They have given free use of this title to Congregations and other church bodies. The founding organization for the Guns to Gardens movement is Rawtools, a ministry based in Colorado and led by Michael Martin, a former Mennonite pastor-turned-blacksmith. RAWtools provides logistical support and safe training on how to use a chop saw. Their national network of blacksmiths forges leftover gun parts into garden tools. Website – Rawtools.org

For further information about Guns to Gardens: Watch the UCC Thursdays for the Soul Video - Shared Learning from Gun Violence Ministries - <https://youtu.be/Nmklnzilc4k>

The following resolution was approved by the delegates at a plenary of the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ, held in Indianapolis June 30-July 4, 2023.

**ACTIVELY AFFIRMING THE HUMAN DIGNITY  
OF TRANSGENDER AND NONBINARY PERSONS**

**A Resolution of Witness**

1 **TEXT OF THE MOTION**

2  
3 **WHEREAS** the United Church of Christ has staked its claim to be an open and affirming  
4 denomination<sup>1</sup> and has worked hard to maintain a radical welcome to the LGBTQ+ community  
5 in many of our churches<sup>2</sup>; and

6  
7 **WHEREAS** the human dignity and human rights of transgender and non-binary people are  
8 being threatened in at least 30 states through legislation that denies access to life-saving health  
9 care, participation in sports, and utilization of gender appropriate bathrooms<sup>3</sup>; and

10  
11 **WHEREAS** gender dysphoria is a serious medical condition that, if left untreated, can result in  
12 severe anxiety and depression, self-harm, and suicidality<sup>4</sup>; and

13  
14 **WHEREAS** when appropriately treated, gender dysphoria is easily managed by following  
15 appropriate treatment protocols to affirm their gender identity and alleviate distress<sup>5</sup>; and

16  
17 **WHEREAS** compassionate parents and medical teams are, in some states, being legally  
18 punished for offering, providing, and extending life-saving healthcare to trans and nonbinary  
19 youth and adults<sup>6</sup>; and

20  
21 **WHEREAS** decisions about gender-affirming medical care must be made between a provider,  
22 patient, and the patient's parents or guardians<sup>7</sup>; and

23  
24 **WHEREAS** trans and nonbinary youth and adults face a higher rate of death by suicide than  
25 their peers and are more vulnerable to violence and death, specifically and disproportionately  
26 transgender women of color<sup>8</sup>; and

27  
28 **WHEREAS** a Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network (GLSEN) survey shows that more  
29 than 80% of "gender expansive" students have been harassed and a third feel unsafe in  
30 classrooms<sup>9</sup>; and

31  
32 **WHEREAS** research shows that it can be extremely harmful for a transgender person to be  
33 excluded from a sports team consistent with their gender identity;<sup>10</sup> and

34  
35 **WHEREAS** in a country where transgender people have no federal protections while they face  
36 massive discrimination and attacks, civil rights must be spelled out and protected<sup>11</sup>; and

37

38 **WHEREAS** public discourse perpetuating the myth of the gender binary causes great harm  
39 when used as the rationale for discrimination and punitive legislation;<sup>12</sup> and  
40

41 **WHEREAS** efforts of allies sometimes fail to provide the support intended for our transgender  
42 and non-binary siblings, including UCC Open and Affirming congregations<sup>13</sup>;  
43

44 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church  
45 of Christ reaffirms the historic commitment of this church to recognize and affirm that every  
46 human being is created in the image of God and is due respect for their inherent human dignity  
47 and rights so that they may not only survive but thrive; and  
48

49 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of  
50 Christ reaffirms and proclaims people of transgender, nonbinary, and gender diverse experiences  
51 are beloved by God, with unique gifts and graces from the Divine for the life of the church and  
52 society, and are among the neighbors Jesus commands us to love and treat with worth and  
53 dignity; and  
54

55 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of  
56 Christ encourages all settings of the church, working with local partners, to advocate for the full  
57 legal equality of transgender, nonbinary, and gender diverse persons; and  
58

59 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of  
60 Christ encourages all settings of the church to amplify the affirming voices of our sacred texts to  
61 stand in solidarity with transgender, nonbinary, and gender diverse persons against harm done,  
62 often through the use of religious language; and  
63

64 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of  
65 Christ encourages all settings of the church to organize to provide aid, comfort, and sanctuary to  
66 all who have been made refugees by hostile legislation; and  
67

68 **BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of  
69 Christ calls on the leadership and other appropriate ministries of the United Church of Christ to  
70 create and share resources to help congregations, communities, policy-makers and activists to  
71 develop gender-affirming practices in all aspects of the United Church of Christ and its  
72 communities of context.  
73

74 **FUNDING:** The funding the implementation of this resolution will be made in accordance with  
75 the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.  
76

77 **IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries  
78 or other entities with the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

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<sup>1</sup> United Church of Christ. *Resolution: Calling on United Church of Christ Congregations to Declare themselves Open and Affirming*, adopted by the Fifteenth General Synod, United Church of Christ, Ames, Iowa, June 28-July 2, 1985.

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<sup>2</sup> United Church of Christ. *Resolution: Affirming the Participation and Ministry of Transgender People Within the United Church of Christ and Supporting Their Civil and Human Rights*, adopted by the Twenty-Fourth General Synod, United Church of Christ, Minneapolis, MN, July 11-15, 2003.

<sup>3</sup>United Church of Christ Transgender/Nonbinary Strategy Team. *Transgender and Nonbinary Dignity and Rights Under Attack: Talking Points for Faith Leaders*, p. 3. <https://www.ucc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Transgender-Talking-Points-for-Faith-Leaders.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> ACLU. *Hecox V Little – Adkins Declaration*, p. 5 <https://www.aclu.org/legal-document/hecox-v-little-adkins-declaration>.

<sup>5</sup> ACLU. *Hecox V Little – Adkins Declaration*, p. 6, <https://www.aclu.org/legal-document/hecox-v-little-adkins-declaration>.

<sup>6</sup> American College of Physicians. *Attacks on Gender-Affirming and Transgender Health Care*, November 11, 2022, <https://www.acponline.org/advocacy/state-health-policy/attacks-on-gender-affirming-and-transgender-health-care>, and:

ACLU. *Four Myths About Trans Athletes, Debunked*, <https://www.aclu.org/news/lgbtq-rights/four-myths-about-trans-athletes-debunked>.

<sup>7</sup> United Church of Christ Transgender/Nonbinary Strategy Team. *Transgender and Nonbinary Dignity and Rights Under Attack: Talking Points for Faith Leaders*, p. 3. <https://www.ucc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Transgender-Talking-Points-for-Faith-Leaders.pdf>.

<sup>8</sup> HRC. *Fatal Violence Against the Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Community in 2021*, <https://www.hrc.org/resources/fatal-violence-against-the-transgender-and-gender-non-conforming-community-in-2021>, and

HRC. *Human Rights Campaign Foundation Marks Ten Years of Tracking Violence Against Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming People, Recording 32 Fatalities in 2022*, <https://www.hrc.org/press-releases/human-rights-campaign-foundation-marks-ten-years-of-tracking-violence-against-transgender-and-gender-non-conforming-people-recording-32-fatalities-in-2022>, and;

The Trevor Project, *Facts About LGBTQ Youth Suicide*, <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/resources/article/facts-about-lgbtq-youth-suicide/>.

<sup>9</sup> Movement Advancement Project and GLSEN. *Separation and Stigma: Transgender Youth & School Facilities*, April 2017. <http://lgbtmap.org/transgender-youth-school>.

<sup>10</sup> ACLU. *Four Myths About Trans Athletes, Debunked*, <https://www.aclu.org/news/lgbtq-rights/four-myths-about-trans-athletes-debunked>

<sup>11</sup> United Church of Christ Transgender/Nonbinary Strategy Team. *Transgender and Nonbinary Dignity and Rights Under Attack: Talking Points for Faith Leaders*, p. 3. <https://www.ucc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Transgender-Talking-Points-for-Faith-Leaders.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> Intomore. *Anti-LGBTQ Activist Admits Bathroom Predator Myth Was ‘Concocted’ As Cover for Transphobic Hate*, Dawn Ennis, Intomore.com, Dec. 4, 2018

<sup>13</sup> PFLAG. *Guide to Being a Trans Ally*, <https://openandaffirming.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/PFLAG-Guide-to-Being-a-Trans-Ally.pdf>, and;

HRC. *What Does the Bible Say About Transgender People*, Austen Hartke, Myles Markham, produced by the HRC Foundation, <https://www.hrc.org/resources/what-does-the-bible-say-about-transgender-people>



The following resolution was approved by the delegates at a plenary of the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ, held in Indianapolis June 30-July 4, 2023.

**A RESOLUTION TO URGE ALL RESPONSIBLE ENTITIES TO JOIN IN REPARATIONS TO FUND CHRISTIAN HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE EDUCATION PROGRAMS TO UNDO A CENTURY OF EXTINCTION. AMERICANIZATION AND INDOCTRINATION POLICIES EXTINGUISHED THE ORIGINAL CHRISTIAN HAWAIIAN ALPHABET.**

**A Resolution of Witness**

**TEXT OF THE MOTION**

**WHEREAS** the US congress passed the 1819 Civilization Act<sup>1</sup> which funded missionary organizations to civilize natives in Hawaii, America, Alaska and

**WHEREAS** in 1820 the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions arrived in the Sandwich Islands<sup>2</sup>, and

**WHEREAS** in 1823 Luakini Maunakea ma Kalapana was the first church built on the East side of Hawaii island<sup>3</sup>, and

**WHEREAS** December 19, 1831, Princess Pauahi was born an heir of the Kamehameha family<sup>4</sup>, and

**WHEREAS** the process to translate and print the first Hawaiian Bible titled “Palapala Hemolele” began in 1822 - 1839 and was published in two parts 1832 Buke I (Old Testament and 1839 Buke II (New Testament)<sup>5</sup> and

**WHEREAS** the all white officers of the Hawaiian Evangelical Association board was created in 1854<sup>6</sup>, and

**WHEREAS** in 1863 Rufus Anderson Secretary of the ABCFM recommended to the all white board members to transfer control of the church in the Hawaiian Kingdom to Hawaiians which the churches officers did not do continuing their control today<sup>7</sup>, and

**WHEREAS** on October 16, 1884 Princess Pauahi passed leaving a legacy through her will to educate Hawaiian children in the Christian Hawaiian language<sup>8</sup>, and

**WHEREAS** on November 4, 1887 the founding ceremony blessed the opening of the Kamehameha schools for boys<sup>9</sup>, and

**WHEREAS** Reverend William Oleson the first principal for the Kamehameha Schools banned the Christian Hawaiian language from being spoken on the Kamehameha Schools campus<sup>10</sup>, and

**WHEREAS** in 1887 White church officers of the Hawaiian Evangelical Association and Reverend William Oleson forced King Kalakaua to sign a new constitution<sup>11</sup>, and

39 **WHEREAS** in 1893 White church officers of the Hawaiian Evangelical Association  
40 collaborated with U.S. minister Stevens to overthrow the Hawaiian Kingdom<sup>12</sup>, and

41  
42 **WHEREAS** in 1895 the Republic of Hawaii implemented Act 57 which banned Christian  
43 Hawaiian language from being spoken in public schools<sup>13</sup>, and

44  
45 **WHEREAS** in 1906 the Department of Public Instruction implemented policies of  
46 Americanization in Public schools to Americanize all the children<sup>14</sup>, and

47  
48 **WHEREAS** in 1916 the Congress passed the National Defense Act that funded the identity  
49 altering JROTC program at Kamehameha schools<sup>15</sup>, and

50  
51 **WHEREAS** all of these actions and more combined to extinguish the Christian Hawaiian  
52 language of twenty-one letters from 1822<sup>16</sup>, and

53  
54 **WHEREAS** in the 1980's revitalization of Hawaiian language only thirteen letters were  
55 recognized as being Hawaiian letters;

56  
57 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United  
58 Church of Christ recognizes the first Christian Hawaiian language (alphabet of twenty-one  
59 letters), which was created by Hawaiian Chiefs and The American Board of Commissioners  
60 for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) missionaries, that was printed in 1822, as relevant and  
61 valuable and calls on all other settings of the United Church of Christ to do the same; and

62  
63 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church  
64 of Christ encourages all settings of the United Church of Christ to increase awareness of the  
65 Americanization and indoctrination policies, enforced by the colonizers of the Hawaiian  
66 Kingdom, that led to extinguishing the Christian Hawaiian language as part of a larger project  
67 of cultural genocide; and

68  
69 **BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church  
70 of Christ encourages all settings of the United Church of Christ to support the Association of  
71 Hawaiian Evangelical Churches of the UCC's initiative to solicit funding from all settings of  
72 the Church to revitalize the Christian Hawaiian language through luakini<sup>17</sup> education  
73 programs from preschool through adulthood.

74  
75 **FUNDING:** The funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance  
76 with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

77  
78 **IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate  
79 ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the  
80 implementing body.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://drive.google.com/file/d/18ZMs7zIQF0hm3wsuSLX\\_igLJXAdyZ6ka/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/18ZMs7zIQF0hm3wsuSLX_igLJXAdyZ6ka/view)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.congregationallibrary.org/finding-aids/ABCFMOverview>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.papakilodatabase.com/pdnupepa/?a=d&d=KLHA18750826-01.2.12&srpos=1&anchor=sectionleveltabtranslationarea&e=-----en-20--1--txt-txIN%7ctxNU%7ctxTR%7ctxTI-%22Luakini+Maunakea%22-----#sectionleveltabtranslationarea>

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.ksbe.edu/about\\_us/about\\_pauahi/#:~:text=Pauahi%20P%C4%81k%C4%AB%20was%20born%20on,under%20his%20rule%20in%201810](https://www.ksbe.edu/about_us/about_pauahi/#:~:text=Pauahi%20P%C4%81k%C4%AB%20was%20born%20on,under%20his%20rule%20in%201810)

<sup>5</sup> <https://historichawaii.org/2022/08/25/the-first-printing-a-written-hawaiian-language/>

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- <sup>6</sup> <https://ahecchurch.weebly.com/>
- <sup>7</sup> <https://hawaiiankingdom.org/blog/dr-ron-williams-second-of-four-part-series-united-church-of-christ-ho%ca%bbeu%ca%bbeu-hou-sons-of-the-mission-and-the-shaping-of-a-new-mission-1863-1888/>
- <sup>8</sup> [https://www.ksbe.edu/about\\_us/about\\_pauahi/#:~:text=Pauahi%20P%C4%81k%C4%AB%20was%20born%20on,under%20his%20rule%20in%201810.](https://www.ksbe.edu/about_us/about_pauahi/#:~:text=Pauahi%20P%C4%81k%C4%AB%20was%20born%20on,under%20his%20rule%20in%201810.)
- <sup>9</sup> [https://www.ksbe.edu/about\\_us/about\\_pauahi/#:~:text=Pauahi%20P%C4%81k%C4%AB%20was%20born%20on,under%20his%20rule%20in%201810](https://www.ksbe.edu/about_us/about_pauahi/#:~:text=Pauahi%20P%C4%81k%C4%AB%20was%20born%20on,under%20his%20rule%20in%201810)
- <sup>10</sup> <https://kaiwakiloumoku.ksbe.edu/article/essays-supression-of-hawaiian-culture-at-kamehameha-schools#:~:text=This%20was%20in%20the%20late,at%20Kaiwi'ula%20was%20relentless.>
- <sup>11</sup> <https://hawaiiankingdom.org/blog/dr-ron-williams-third-of-four-part-series-united-church-of-christ-poe-karitiano-oiaio/>
- <sup>12</sup> <https://hawaiiankingdom.org/blog/dr-ron-williams-third-of-four-part-series-united-church-of-christ-poe-karitiano-oiaio/>
- <sup>13</sup> [https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session2022/bills/HB2284\\_.HTM#:~:text=Act%2057%20declared%20an%20English,Session%20Laws%20of%20Hawaii%201986.](https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session2022/bills/HB2284_.HTM#:~:text=Act%2057%20declared%20an%20English,Session%20Laws%20of%20Hawaii%201986.)
- <sup>14</sup> <https://hawaiiankingdom.org/blog/addressing-americanization-by-the-hawaiian-council-of-regency/>
- <sup>15</sup> <https://blogs.ksbe.edu/archives/collections-2/r-o-t-c-j-r-o-t-c-and-military-training-collection/>
- <sup>16</sup> <https://historichawaii.org/2022/08/25/the-first-printing-a-written-hawaiian-language/>
- <sup>17</sup> <https://wehewehe.org/gsd12.85/cgi-bin/hdict?a=q&r=1&hs=1&m=-1&o=-1&qto=4&e=p-11000-00--off-0hdict--00-1----0-10-0---0---0direct-10-ED--4--textpukuieibert%252ctextmamaka----0-11--11-haw-Zz-1---Zz-1-home---00-3-1-00-0--4----0-0-11-00-0utfZz-8-00&q=luakini&fqv=textpukuieibert%252ctextmamaka&af=1&fqf=ED#hero-bottom-banner>

The following resolution was approved by the delegates at a plenary of the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ, held in Indianapolis June 30-July 4, 2023.

## **Denouncing the *Dobbs* Decision and Proclaiming Abortion as Healthcare**

### **A Resolution of Witness**

1 **Text of the Motion**

2

3 **Whereas** the *Dobbs* decision overturned *Roe v. Wade* and ruled that there is no constitutional  
4 right to abortion;

5

6 **Whereas** a majority of Americans support legal abortion in all or most cases;<sup>1</sup>

7

8 **Whereas** anti-abortion laws do not decrease abortion rates but make abortions more dangerous  
9 by eliminating access to safe, affordable, and medically-necessary abortions;<sup>2</sup>

10

11 **Whereas** abortion care following miscarriage is severely restricted by abortion bans, threatening  
12 the lives of pregnant people in their time of grief;<sup>3</sup>

13

14 **Whereas** people of lower socioeconomic status and people of color are more likely to receive  
15 abortion care, due to systemic factors including poverty, lack of access to contraception, and  
16 distrust of the medical system,<sup>4</sup> and whereas anti-abortion laws deepen unequal access to  
17 comprehensive reproductive care, with insufficient access mostly affecting rural communities  
18 and Black and Brown communities and negative reproductive health outcomes  
19 disproportionately affecting people of color;<sup>5</sup>

20

21 **Whereas** General Synod 8 “[called] for the repeal of all legal prohibitions of physician-  
22 performed abortions”;<sup>6</sup> General Synod 12 “[reaffirmed] full freedom of choice for the persons  
23 involved in making decisions regarding pregnancy”;<sup>7</sup> General Synod 17 “[deplored] the decision  
24 handed down today by the United States Supreme Court severely limiting major provisions of  
25 *Roe v. Wade* as undermining the spirit of the constitutional freedom of choice of women of this  
26 nation and making freedom of choice essentially a luxury for those who are not economically  
27 disadvantaged;”<sup>8</sup>

28

29 **Whereas** previous General Synods (12, 13, 16, 18) have paired support for safe and legal  
30 abortions with a desire for information and resources about contraception and family planning,  
31 and teen abortion rates decline with free access to contraception;<sup>9</sup> and the United Church of  
32 Christ has heeded this call through holistic, faithful sexuality education, Our Whole Lives, which  
33 helps participants make informed and responsible decisions about their sexual health and  
34 behavior;

35

36 **Whereas** Justice Thomas’ concurring opinion in *Dobbs* threatens Constitutional protection for  
37 access to contraception, as well as protection for same-sex sexual relations and marriage;<sup>10</sup>

38

39 **Whereas** the UCC Medical Benefits Plan covers abortion “per Plan policies and per individual  
40 state regulations,”<sup>11</sup> and is now an unequal benefit across states where the UCC Medical Plan has  
41 beneficiaries;

42  
43 **Therefore be it resolved** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ  
44 affirms the right of all people to access reproductive healthcare including contraception and  
45 abortion and takes the following actions:

46  
47 Proclaims that forced birth is an act of sexual violence and the choice to have and care for  
48 children is a sacred decision which should not be forced upon anyone;

49  
50 Proclaims that every person seeking an abortion is a beloved child of God, our neighbor, a  
51 person we love;

52  
53 Denounces the overturn of legal precedent in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization*  
54 and condemns all laws banning abortion or restricting access to reproductive health services;

55  
56 Affirms the morality of resisting by peaceful means, including civil disobedience, any laws  
57 banning abortions, and calls upon every setting of the United Church of Christ to use Just Peace  
58 practices<sup>12</sup> to confront abortion bans and restrictions on reproductive healthcare;

59  
60 Calls upon the National Setting of the United Church of Christ and the Conferences to explore  
61 and pursue all avenues for legal challenges to abortion bans;

62  
63 Directs the United Church of Christ Board to explore creation of a Bail Fund, as necessary, for  
64 UCC members arrested for participation in civil disobedience or other acts of non-violent  
65 Christian witness that promote social, racial, economic, environmental, gender, and reproductive  
66 justice; the UCC Board shall report on their progress of this exploration by General Synod 35;

67  
68 Calls upon the Pension Boards to ensure that benefits parity exists for all beneficiaries covered  
69 under UCC Medical. Benefits parity shall include covering travel costs for any covered persons  
70 needing to travel out of state to access abortion and contraception unlawful in their own State.  
71 Benefits parity in this regard shall be completed no later than the end of 2025. The Pension  
72 Boards shall report on their progress in implementing benefits parity by General Synod 35.

73  
74 In the period between General Synod 34 and the end of 2025, the 34<sup>th</sup> General Synod calls upon  
75 the UCBMA (United Church Board Ministerial Assistance) to provide emergency grants to any  
76 UCC Medical beneficiaries and other eligible applicants to cover out of pocket costs and travel  
77 costs incurred by accessing care not available in their home state. Eligible costs shall include  
78 any such costs impacting households of any authorized minister, member in discernment, and  
79 eligible lay employee. The UCBMA shall continue to ensure that the application process for  
80 such emergency grants will not require the disclosure of medically sensitive information. The  
81 UCBMA—in collaboration with the Pension Boards, Conference Ministers, and the National  
82 Setting—shall widely communicate the availability of these emergency grants throughout the  
83 United Church of Christ

84 Calls upon Local Churches and their members to engage with the Our Whole Lives: Sexuality  
85 and Our Faith curriculum to promote holistic sexuality education, including information and  
86 education about contraception, and to support and offer access to contraceptives;

87  
88 Calls upon Local Churches, Associations, and Conferences to physically, financially, and  
89 spiritually accompany people seeking and receiving abortions and other reproductive healthcare,  
90 in partnership with local health care agencies and abortion funds.

91  
92 **Funding:** The funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with  
93 the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

94  
95 **Implementation:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or  
96 other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2022/05/06/americas-abortion-quandary/>

<sup>2</sup> “Women living under the most restrictive abortion laws (i.e., where abortion is prohibited altogether or allowed only to save a woman’s life) have abortions at about the same rate as those living where the procedure is available without restriction as to reason” (p. 8)

“The more restrictive the legal setting, the higher the proportion of abortions that are least safe – ranging from less than 1% in the least-restrictive countries to 31% in the most-restrictive countries... even where abortion is broadly legal, inadequate provision of affordable services can limit access to safe services. In addition, persistent stigma can affect the willingness of providers to offer abortions, and can lead women to prioritize secrecy over safety.” (p. 5)

[https://www.gutmacher.org/sites/default/files/report\\_pdf/abortion-worldwide-2017.pdf](https://www.gutmacher.org/sites/default/files/report_pdf/abortion-worldwide-2017.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2022/05/10/1097734167/in-texas-abortion-laws-inhibit-care-for-miscarriages>

“One Texas law passed last year lists several medications as abortion-inducing drugs and largely bars their use for abortion after the seventh week of pregnancy. But two of those drugs, misoprostol and mifepristone, are the only drugs recommended in the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists guidelines for treating a patient after an early pregnancy loss.

The other miscarriage treatment is a procedure described as surgical uterine evacuation to remove the pregnancy tissue — the same approach as for an abortion.”

“For some [patients, waiting until the bleeding starts and the pregnancy tissue is naturally released] is too difficult, given the emotions surrounding the pregnancy loss... Instead, the patient may choose medication or a surgical evacuation procedure, which Briggs said may prove necessary to avoid a patient becoming septic if some of the tissue remains in the uterus.”

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3780732/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7813444/>

<sup>6</sup> [http://rescarta.ucc.org/jsp/RcWebImageViewer.jsp?doc\\_id=8abee2f6-352d-48f9-958b-49a311bc4489/ucoc0000/UD000001/00000009&pg\\_seq=60&search\\_doc=](http://rescarta.ucc.org/jsp/RcWebImageViewer.jsp?doc_id=8abee2f6-352d-48f9-958b-49a311bc4489/ucoc0000/UD000001/00000009&pg_seq=60&search_doc=)

<sup>7</sup> [http://rescarta.ucc.org/jsp/RcWebImageViewer.jsp?doc\\_id=8abee2f6-352d-48f9-958b-49a311bc4489/ucoc0000/UD000001/00000013&pg\\_seq=91&search\\_doc=](http://rescarta.ucc.org/jsp/RcWebImageViewer.jsp?doc_id=8abee2f6-352d-48f9-958b-49a311bc4489/ucoc0000/UD000001/00000013&pg_seq=91&search_doc=)

<sup>8</sup> [http://rescarta.ucc.org/jsp/RcWebImageViewer.jsp?doc\\_id=8abee2f6-352d-48f9-958b-49a311bc4489/ucoc0000/UD000001/00000018&pg\\_seq=54&search\\_doc=](http://rescarta.ucc.org/jsp/RcWebImageViewer.jsp?doc_id=8abee2f6-352d-48f9-958b-49a311bc4489/ucoc0000/UD000001/00000018&pg_seq=54&search_doc=)

<sup>9</sup> Colorado’s [teen birth rate fell 54 percent and the teen abortion rate declined 64 percent in the last eight years](#) due to free access to contraception, especially IUD’s.

<sup>10</sup> “in future cases, we should reconsider all of this Court’s substantive due process precedents, including Griswold, Lawrence, and Obergefell.” [https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/21pdf/19-1392\\_6j37.pdf](https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/21pdf/19-1392_6j37.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> [https://pbucc.org/images/pbucc/publications/Health/Non-Med\\_Highlights\\_2023\\_102022.pdf](https://pbucc.org/images/pbucc/publications/Health/Non-Med_Highlights_2023_102022.pdf)

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<sup>12</sup> Just Peace Practices:

1. Support non-violent direct action.
2. Take independent initiatives to reduce threat.
3. Use cooperative conflict resolution.
4. Acknowledge responsibility for conflict and injustice and seek repentance and forgiveness.
5. Advance democracy, human rights, and religious liberty.
6. Foster just and sustainable economic development.
7. Work with emerging cooperative forces in the international system.
8. Strengthen the United Nations and international efforts for cooperation and human rights.
9. Reduce offensive weapons and weapons trade.
10. Encourage grassroots peacemaking groups and voluntary associations.

The following resolution was approved by the delegates at a plenary of the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ, held in Indianapolis June 30-July 4, 2023.

**A RESOLUTION CONDEMNING PROLONGED SOLITARY CONFINEMENT  
AS A FORM OF TORTURE**

**A Resolution of Witness**

**TEXT OF THE MOTION**

**WHEREAS** the Twelfth General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopted a “Pronouncement on Human Rights” that denounced torture of any kind and affirmed that the “relationship of God to creation gives all human beings their in-alienable human right.” And further stated that “rights must be not only declared and codified, but also must be cared for, nurtured and embodied in covenant relationships between persons, groups, nations and between human beings and nature”<sup>1</sup>, and

**WHEREAS** solitary confinement is defined by the United Nations in its Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, as revised in 2015, also known as “The Nelson Mandela Rules,” as the confinement of prisoners for 22 hours or more a day without meaningful human contact, in excess of 15 days)<sup>2</sup>, and

**WHEREAS** long-term isolation has been shown to offer no rehabilitative benefit, but its destructive psychological effects are well-documented,<sup>3</sup> amounting to torture under international law<sup>4</sup>, and

**WHEREAS** solitary confinement as a form of torture violates the U.N. Convention Against Torture,<sup>5</sup> the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination,<sup>6</sup> and the U.N. International Convention on Civil and Political Rights<sup>7</sup>, and

**WHEREAS** the Thirtieth General Synod of the United Church of Christ called for the dismantling of discriminatory systems of mass incarceration in the United States, a system that has resulted in the proliferation of prolonged solitary confinement nationwide, making the U.S. a global outlier in its use of incarceration and the systematic torture of prolonged solitary confinement<sup>8</sup>, and

**WHEREAS** the carceral system in the U.S. is built on racism<sup>9</sup> and cannot be reformed, we seek ways to reduce harm to those currently incarcerated as we work toward alternatives to incarceration.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ recognizes prolonged solitary confinement, as defined by “The Nelson Mandela Rules,” as a form of torture.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ recognizes the potential for abuse in all forms of solitary confinement for any duration of time and condemns its use.



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**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ condemns the use of prolonged solitary confinement by the United States and any government in the world, including national, state, local, and military jurisdictions, immigration detention centers, and private prisons and calls on our government to explore and implement alternatives to isolated confinement.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls on all members of the United Church of Christ to demand that their government ends any use of prolonged solitary confinement in prisons, jails, and detention centers, whether publicly run or contracted with private companies.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that as Christians we are called to amplify the voices of the oppressed, including the voices and leadership of the formerly incarcerated who return to society with an intimate knowledge of prison policies and offer first-hand knowledge of the harm caused by prolonged solitary confinement.

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls all settings to work with other faiths and human rights groups, including the National Religious Campaign Against Torture<sup>10</sup>, among others, to condemn the torture of prolonged solitary confinement, work toward its abolition in the United States and around the world, and support humane and restorative alternatives.

**FUNDING:** The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

**IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://new.uccfiles.com/synod/resolutions/THE%20%20PFOUNDMENT-ON-HUMAN-RIGHTS-GS12.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N15/443/41/PDF/N1544341.pdf?OpenElement>

<sup>3</sup> [https://openscholarship.wustl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1362&context=law\\_journal\\_law\\_policy](https://openscholarship.wustl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1362&context=law_journal_law_policy)

<sup>4</sup> <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N15/443/41/PDF/N1544341.pdf?OpenElement>

<sup>5</sup> <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N15/443/41/PDF/N1544341.pdf?OpenElement>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-convention-elimination-all-forms-racial>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-civil-and-political-rights>

<sup>8</sup> <https://new.uccfiles.com/pdf/GS30-DISMANTLING-DISCRIMINATORY-SYSTEMS-OF-MASS-INCARCERATION.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> [https://www.sentencingproject.org/app/uploads/2022/10/07-14-2022\\_CERD-Shadow-Report-Draft\\_with\\_endnotes.pdf](https://www.sentencingproject.org/app/uploads/2022/10/07-14-2022_CERD-Shadow-Report-Draft_with_endnotes.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.nrcat.org/>

The following resolution was approved by the delegates at a plenary of the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ, held in Indianapolis June 30-July 4, 2023.

## **Free from Plastic Pollution**

### **A Resolution of Witness**

#### **1 TEXT OF THE RESOLUTION**

2  
3 **WHEREAS** the scriptures (Genesis 1:1-2:6, Psalm 24:1, Isaiah 24:3-6, Jeremiah 4:23-26) hold  
4 us responsible for the way we co-live and use God’s creation, the Earth, and

5  
6 **WHEREAS** plastics resist degrading for hundreds of years, and they break down into  
7 microplastic beads; and animals, birds, fish, and humans consume microplastics<sup>1</sup> to the  
8 detriment of their health, and

9  
10 **WHEREAS** United Church of Christ General Synods have passed environmental resolutions  
11 The Earth is the Lord’s<sup>2</sup> (2017), The Use of Plastic Foam<sup>3</sup> (2019), and The Rights of Nature<sup>4</sup>  
12 (2021), and

13  
14 **WHEREAS** plastic pollution is an environmental justice concern of the UCC,<sup>5</sup> and

15  
16 **WHEREAS** plastic pollution disproportionately impacts vulnerable communities, including low  
17 income people and people of color, and must be addressed from production to waste,<sup>6</sup> and

18  
19 **WHEREAS** plastics are made from harmful petrochemicals that impact the health and well-  
20 being of biological life and planetary ecosystems, and the production of toxic petrochemicals  
21 disproportionately harms those living in close proximity,<sup>7</sup> and

22  
23 **WHEREAS** the United Nations has called upon global faith communities to work against plastic  
24 pollution,<sup>8</sup> and

25  
26 **WHEREAS** current attempts, locally, nationally, and internationally to manage plastic pollution  
27 are woefully inadequate, and

28  
29 **WHEREAS** local cleanups of plastic litter have limited impact and recycling is not effective for  
30 most plastic items.<sup>9</sup>

31  
32 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United  
33 Church of Christ is called to speak truth to power against plastic “de-creation” (an academic and  
34 theological term that may refer to desacralizing, destroying or undoing that which is whole or has  
35 been whole in nature, the Earth, plants, animals, forests, and pollution, even when it is  
36 inconvenient or difficult), and

37  
38 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the Thirty-Fourth General Synod encourages all our  
39 settings to commit to changing from a disposable culture to a reusable, sustainable one, and  
40

41 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the Thirty-Fourth General Synod encourages education  
42 within our congregations and in our communities to advocate for alternatives to single use  
43 plastics, whether through mitigation efforts and campaigns or by supporting local and state bans  
44 on single use plastics, and

45  
46 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod encourages all settings of  
47 the Church to determine the best pathway forward for strategies and actions to mitigate plastic  
48 pollution, using as examples the following resources:

- 49 • The Story of Plastics, (95-minute documentary)<sup>10</sup>
- 50 • Sierra Club Solutions to Plastic Pandemic<sup>11</sup>
- 51 • Ten Towns –Ten actions Toolkit of New Hampshire.<sup>12</sup>
- 52 • National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF): Join the Fight for Reducing  
53 Plastic Pollution<sup>13</sup>
- 54 • Break Free Plastics: resources, articles, list of the worst corporate polluters and  
55 suggestions for actions.<sup>14</sup> and

56  
57  
58 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod encourages Conferences,  
59 Associations, Congregations, Synods and all settings of the United Church of Christ to reduce  
60 the use of single-use plastics and packaging, and

61  
62 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod commends all settings of  
63 the church to join in possible opportunities for participation in addressing plastic pollution  
64 including the following:

- 65 • Encouraging all settings of the Church to commit to change from the throwaway and  
66 disposable culture and consumptive practices to reusable and compostable products.<sup>15</sup>
- 67 • Encouraging replacement of single use plastics with bioplastics, reusable, or  
68 compostable substitutes.
- 69 • Preaching on ecological sustainability principles articulated by Sallie McFague on  
70 responsible use of ecological resources<sup>16</sup> and the sustainable goal of mitigating single-  
71 use plastics.
- 72 • Educating on the importance of mitigation of single-use plastics and plastic straws as  
73 well as plastic bottles at our churches, their events, and gatherings.
- 74 • Educating on the toxicity of plastic pollutions and microplastics to the health of our  
75 environment, to our own health, and the health of non-human life.
- 76 • Educating on policies and practices of local recycling and composting services and  
77 advocating for better practices.
- 78 • Organizing low or zero waste events in collaboration with local organizations and  
79 infrastructures.
- 80 • Supporting businesses that use sustainable practices such as reusable containers and  
81 reusable bags.
- 82 • Participating in public cleanup of God’s creation, including all bodies of water, parks,  
83 and beaches.<sup>17</sup>
- 84 • Installing fountains for water bottles in church campuses, wherever possible.
- 85 • Actively supporting and lobbying for local, state, national, and international legislation  
86 and policies that align with the intention of this resolution including bans of or fees on  
87 single use plastics, and

88

89 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the Thirty-Fourth General Synod acknowledges that  
90 accommodations in expectations need to be made for certain impacted groups such as those who  
91 are disabled or unhoused, and

92  
93 **BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED THAT** the Thirty-Fourth General Synod encourages all settings  
94 to speak truth to the public square against plastic pollution of the planet.

95  
96 **Funding:** The funding for the implementation of the Resolution be made in accordance with  
97 overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

98  
99 **Implementation:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other  
100 entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

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<sup>1</sup>The environmental impacts of plastics and micro-plastics use, waste and pollution: EU and national measures, Study Requested by the PETI Committee, European Parliament, [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2020/658279/IPOL\\_STU\(2020\)658279\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2020/658279/IPOL_STU(2020)658279_EN.pdf)

<sup>2</sup>[https://www.ucc.org/wpcontent/uploads/unitedchurchofchrist/pages/9126/attachments/original/1499204117/UCC\\_Synod\\_2017\\_Climate\\_Resolution\\_-\\_FINAL\\_as\\_passed.pdf?1499204117](https://www.ucc.org/wpcontent/uploads/unitedchurchofchrist/pages/9126/attachments/original/1499204117/UCC_Synod_2017_Climate_Resolution_-_FINAL_as_passed.pdf?1499204117)

<sup>3</sup>GS32-Minutes.pdf (uccfiles.com) page 48

<sup>4</sup>Approved\_UCCB-21-10-04-Minutes33rdGeneralSynod\_10.15.2021w-App.pdf page 42

<sup>5</sup> Both the Florida UCC Conference and the New Hampshire UCC Conferences have passed resolutions at the 2022 Annual Gatherings.

<sup>6</sup> Picking Up Litter: Pointless or Powerful Tool in he battle of plastic pollution?" UN Environmental Program, <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/picking-litter-pointless-exercise-or-powerful-tool-battle-beat-plastic-Program>

<sup>7</sup> ‘Do Plastics Make Us Sick? “ Plastics Health Coalition, <https://www.plastichealthcoalition.org/>

<sup>8</sup> UN Calls Upon Faith Communities to work against Plastic Pollution, Crux, February 22, 2022, U.N. wants faith groups to help work against plastic pollution | Crux (cruxnow.com)

<sup>9</sup> “More Recycling Won’t Solve the Plastics Pollution,” Scientific American, <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/observations/more-recycling-wont-solve-plastic-pollution/> 15  
[https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senatebill/984#:~:text=Introduced%20in%20Senate%20\(03%2F25%2F2021\)&text=This%20bill%20sets%20forth%20requirements,or%20compost%20products%20and%20materials.](https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senatebill/984#:~:text=Introduced%20in%20Senate%20(03%2F25%2F2021)&text=This%20bill%20sets%20forth%20requirements,or%20compost%20products%20and%20materials.)

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.storyofstuff.org/movies/the-story-of-plastic-documentary-film/how-to-watch/>  
<sup>11</sup> <https://www.sierraclub.org/maryland/zero-waste/story-of-plastic>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.10towns.org/resources/plastic-pollution-book-list>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.neefusa.org/nature/water/join-fight-reduce-plastic-pollution>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.breakfreefromplastic.org/>

<sup>15</sup> See Yes Magazine The Solving of the Plastics Issue, <https://www.yesmagazine.org/issues/solvingplastic>  
Also see eco-friendly alternatives, Eco-Friendly Alternatives for Disposable Plastic Water Bottles | Cedar Springs Blog (cedarspringswater.ca)

<sup>16</sup> McFague, *A New Climate for Theology*

<sup>17</sup> See Green Peace, <https://www.greenpeace.org/international/campaign/toolkit-plasticfree-future/>

The following resolution was sent directly to implementing bodies by the delegates of the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ, held in Indianapolis June 30-July 4, 2023.

**Affirming Licensed and Commissioned Ministers  
as Authorized Ministers in the United Church of Christ**

**A Prudential Resolution**

**SUMMARY**

This resolution seeks to affirm both Licensed Ministry and Commissioned Ministry as Authorized Ministries of the United Church of Christ in accordance with the current Constitution and Bylaws of the UCC<sup>1</sup> and to direct the Ministerial Excellence, Support, and Authorization of Local Church Ministries (a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ) to amend the *Manual on Ministry: A Guide to Authorizing Ministry in the United Church of Christ* © 2018 to include recommended processes and procedures for authorizing these forms of ministry.

**BIBICAL, THEOLOGICAL, AND ETHICAL RATIONAL**

In the letter to the church at Corinth, the Apostle writes: “Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good... Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? But strive for the greater gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.”<sup>2</sup>

Similarly, the Apostle writes to the church in Rome: “I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body, we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.”<sup>3</sup>

Under the heading “Theology of Ministry and Ordination” in *Manual on Ministry: A Guide to Authorizing Ministry in the United Church of Christ* © 2018, we read:

“the United Church of Christ believes that God calls every Christian to be a servant of

39 God, a minister, living and serving in Christ's name. This call is celebrated  
40 sacramentally in baptism as persons are claimed for Christ by the Holy Spirit and the  
41 Church; all who are baptized spend the rest of their lives responding to God's call and  
42 claim. The particulars of each person's call and ministry vary with time, place, talents,  
43 experience, personal situation and responsibilities, and, importantly, the needs of the  
44 world. Ministry is lived in every aspect of one's life as God's love is shown in word and  
45 deed.

46  
47 The particular ministry of reconciling all God's children with one another, with creation,  
48 and with God, was given to God's people in scripture: 'All this is from God, who  
49 reconciled us...through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in  
50 Christ God was reconciling the world to Godself, not counting their trespasses against  
51 them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us' (2 Corinthians 5:18-19). This  
52 ministry is claimed daily by the United Church of Christ as it is called to love God,  
53 neighbor, and self, and to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God  
54 (Matthew 22:36-50 and Micah 6:8). Christians are members of the Body of Christ, the  
55 Church, under the sole headship of Jesus Christ. This is a living body (1 Corinthians 12),  
56 called, formed and sent into the world by the power of the Holy Spirit. Loving and  
57 serving God, the Church has multiple purposes:

- 58 • embodying and proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ to all;
- 59 • nurturing and empowering the gathered Church through worship and  
60 sacraments, fellowship and mutual care, education and spiritual  
61 formation;
- 62 • acting in the world through deeds of justice and loving kindness."<sup>4</sup>

63  
64 In defining ordination, the *Manual on Ministry: A Guide to Authorizing Ministry in the United*  
65 *Church of Christ* © 2018 states:

66  
67 "the Church acknowledges that its members have many diverse ministries in the world  
68 and in the Church. It also recognizes a specific need for representative servant leaders  
69 'to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ'  
70 (Ephesians 4:12). The United Church of Christ, along with the Church Universal  
71 through the ages and throughout the world, affirms God's call to some individuals to be  
72 such leaders who help the Church to be what God intends it to be. These persons are set  
73 apart through prayer and the laying on of hands in the rite of ordination.

74  
75 In ordination, the individual makes a lifetime commitment to God in Jesus Christ and to  
76 the Church, relying on the Holy Spirit. As Ordained Ministers enter the apostolic  
77 ministry, they continue the witness of Christ's followers from New Testament times.  
78 They receive authority from the Triune God to serve in Jesus' name. Ordained Ministers  
79 have particular responsibilities for the proclamation and practice of the Christian faith  
80 and for the life of the Church itself."<sup>5</sup>

81  
82 God calls some to serve for a season in a particular ministry to address the needs of the church.  
83 In those cases, the United Church of Christ has authorized individuals to serve as Licensed  
84 Ministers and Commissioned Ministers without requiring ordination.<sup>6</sup> Those faithful ministers

85 have often served small congregations and offered specialized ministry in various settings. Those  
86 Licensed and Commissioned Ministers have shared their gifts and proclaimed the gospel through  
87 faithful and loving service. Some have pursued ordination. Associations’ and Conferences’  
88 Licensed and Commissioned Ministers have been authorized to serve for a ‘season’ as  
89 Ecclesiastes states: ‘For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven’  
90 (Ecclesiastes 31 NRSV). Affirming those ministries, gifts, and seasons with authorization is  
91 consistent with the belief that all ministry flows from the gift of the Spirit in Baptism.”<sup>7</sup>  
92

93 Based on the covenantal polity of the United Church of Christ, local Associations have  
94 authorized Licensed Ministers and Commissioned Ministers. The Constitution and Bylaws of the  
95 United Church of Christ have not been amended, and the Ministerial Excellence, Support and  
96 Authorization Team of Local Church Ministries (a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of  
97 Christ) has set before the United Church of Christ the challenge of considering lay ministry as a  
98 process leading to ordained ministry. *Manual on Ministry: A Guide to Authorizing Ministry in  
99 the United Church of Christ* © 2018 includes no guidance or processes for those Associations  
100 wanting to continue Licensed Ministry and Commissioned Ministry as they have been practiced.  
101 Some Local Churches, Associations, and Conferences have found it necessary to affirm Licensed  
102 and Commissioned Ministers as valued “authorized” ministers while calling for amending  
103 *Manual on Ministry: A Guide to Authorizing Ministry in the United Church of Christ* © 2018 to  
104 guide Associations in the process of authorizing Licensed and Commissioned Ministers. While  
105 this *Manual on Ministry: A Guide to Authorizing Ministry in the United Church of Christ* © 2018  
106 is subtitled “A Guide to Authorizing Ministry in the United Church of Christ,” it does not  
107 provide processes and procedures many Associations have relied on in previous editions of the  
108 Manual on Ministry.  
109

110 **TEXT OF THE MOTION**

111  
112 **WHEREAS** the Constitution (Article VI) and Bylaws (Preamble and Article I) of the United  
113 Church of Christ recognize three forms of authorized ministers—licensed, commissioned, and  
114 ordained,<sup>8</sup>  
115

116 **AND WHEREAS** those forms of authorized ministry affirm the United Church of Christ’s belief  
117 that all are called to minister,<sup>9</sup>  
118

119 **AND WHEREAS** Local Churches, Associations, and Conferences have been faithfully served  
120 by Licensed Ministers and Commissioned Ministers,  
121

122 **AND WHEREAS** many have affirmed the importance of maintaining both Licensed Ministry  
123 and Commissioned Ministry, as authorized ministries of the United Church of Christ,  
124

125 **AND WHEREAS** the Ministerial Excellence, Support, and Authorization Team of Local Church  
126 Ministries (a Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ) endeavored to set before the  
127 United Church of Christ a common understanding of ordination in the *Manual on Ministry: A  
128 Guide to Authorizing Ministry in the United Church of Christ* © 2018 and their common  
129 understanding requires the affirmation of Associations and Conferences whose practices  
130 regarding authorized ministry may differ in regards to licensed ministry and/or commission

131 ministry,

132

133 **AND WHEREAS** the Ministerial Excellence, Support, and Authorization Team of Local Church  
134 Ministries, A Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ in *Manual on Ministry: A*  
135 *Guide to Authorizing Ministry in the United Church of Christ* © 2018 set forth an understanding  
136 of ordination and provided a path to move through lay ministry to ordained ministry,

137

138 **AND WHEREAS** the *Manual on Ministry: A Guide to Authorizing Ministry in the United*  
139 *Church of Christ* © 2018 does not include processes and procedures for either licensed ministers  
140 or commissioned ministers to gain standing as authorized ministry,

141

142 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of  
143 Christ directs Local Church Ministries to amend *Manual on Ministry: A Guide to Authorizing*  
144 *Ministry in the United Church of Christ* © 2018 so that it provides recommended processes and  
145 procedures for both licensed ministry and commission ministry as authorized ministries for those  
146 Associations that want to maintain and support those forms of authorized ministry; and

147

148 **BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the United Church of Christ Board communicate this  
149 action to all Conferences, Association, and Local Churches.

150

151 **FUNDING:** The funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance  
152 with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

153

154 **IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries  
155 or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

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<sup>1</sup> Constitution and Bylaws of the UCC. Available at: [https://www.ucc.org/ucc\\_constitution\\_and\\_bylaws/](https://www.ucc.org/ucc_constitution_and_bylaws/)

<sup>2</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:7-31, NRSV. Available at:

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+12%3A7-31&version=NRSVA>

<sup>3</sup> Romans 12:1–8 NRSV. Available at:

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+12%3A1%E2%80%938&version=NRSVA>

<sup>4</sup> “Theology of Ministry and Ordination” in *Manual on Ministry: A Guide to Authorizing Ministry in the United Church of Christ* © 2018, pp. 7-8.

<sup>5</sup> *Manual on Ministry: A Guide to Authorizing Ministry in the United Church of Christ* © 2018, p. 8.

<sup>6</sup> Constitution of the UC, Article VI. Available at: [https://www.uccfiles.com/pdf/UCC\\_Constitution.pdf](https://www.uccfiles.com/pdf/UCC_Constitution.pdf)  
and Bylaws Preamble and Article I. Available at: [https://www.uccfiles.com/pdf/UCC\\_Bylaws.pdf](https://www.uccfiles.com/pdf/UCC_Bylaws.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> *Manual on Ministry: A Guide to Authorizing Ministry in the United Church of Christ* © 2018, p. 7.

<sup>8</sup> Constitution and Bylaws of the UCC. Available at: [https://www.ucc.org/ucc\\_constitution\\_and\\_bylaws/](https://www.ucc.org/ucc_constitution_and_bylaws/)

<sup>9</sup> *Manual on Ministry: A Guide to Authorizing Ministry in the United Church of Christ* © 2018, p 7.